

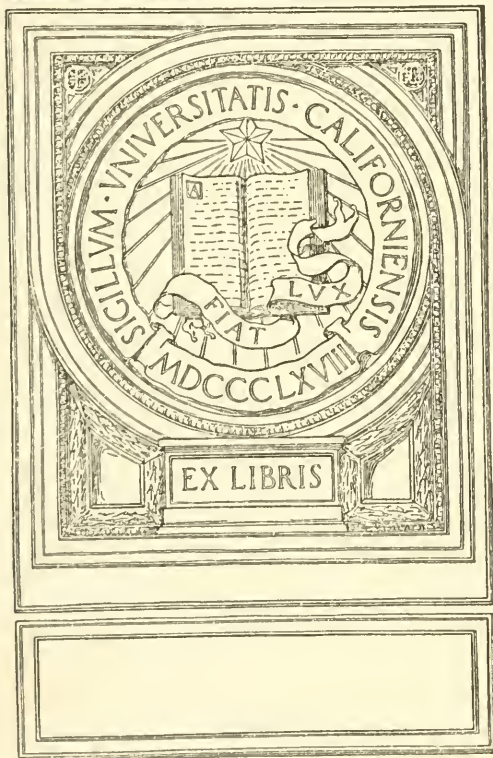
# GERMANY EMBATTLED

AN AMERICAN INTERPRETATION

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OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

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AN AMERICAN INTERPRETATION

BY

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1915

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TO MY MOTHER  
IN DEEPEST GRATITUDE

*Ally*

212377

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## I

### GERMANY AT BAY

“**A** WONDERFUL quiet, certainty, and determination unto death are characteristic of all Germany to-day, and even with all the sorrow we are undergoing we deeply feel the greatness of these times. God bless our arms!” No other phrase that has crossed the ocean more completely states the German frame of mind when the mobilization was over and the empire could catch its breath and realize that by the most sudden, as well as the most violent, of convulsions the Germany and Europe of yesterday had gone forever — that the whole world had changed overnight.

The writer, a woman of rank and position, had but just parted, dry-eyed, from her husband and sixteen soldier relatives of a family which boasts of having had no civilians among its members since 1700. She had no word of regret; only a prayer that she might keep her

self-control and be found worthy of a crisis which had revealed the entire nation so united and determined as to wipe out in a moment all differences of rank, religion, and party. To describe that hour of self-abnegation and self-sacrifice many a gifted writer and man of affairs has found himself utterly at a loss. The thrill and the uplift born of its whole-souled devotion wrenched the populace loose from the purely personal considerations of life and stirred them with all the enthusiasm which comes from a readiness to die for a common cause. The psychology of the crowd was at its noblest height. Even the foreign spectators caught in the sudden swirl of vast, loosened reservoirs of national feeling found it impossible to observe, save with awe, conviction, and deep emotion, this profoundly impressive transformation of a people.

To the Germans their cause is just, their conscience clear. No such outburst of lofty enthusiasm for Kaiser and country would have been possible had there been anywhere as serious doubts as troubled, in England, Charles Trevelyan, Ramsay MacDonald, John Burns,

and Lord Morley. As the facts were presented to the German people there seemed to be no question that their war-lord, who had kept the peace for the twenty-six years of his reign, had in this emergency stood for peace until the last moment, moving only when Russian perfidy compelled him to. It was necessary to strike first, even as a football team seeks to "get the jump" upon its opponents, for if Russia or France were to deliver a blow while German mobilization was under way and incomplete, the country would be in the position of an old-time frigate raked by a broadside when "taken aback" and helpless. The public actually trembled lest the Kaiser hold off too long, and when he moved he seemed to them of Olympian stature. His language, bombastic as it may have appeared abroad, was pitched to the keynote of the hour; one heard for the first time praise of him as *unser lieber, guter Kaiser*. He stood for the whole people when he opened the war session of the Reichstag and, with his great sense of dramatic values, called upon its leaders to come forward and place their hands in his — even the Socialists, whom he had dubbed trai-

tors to the country in a speech at the Krupp works but a few years before. All this at the very moment that battalions in every town and city were marching, singing, to the front and Von Emmich's divisions, without waiting for siege-guns or reservists, were victoriously assaulting Liège.

With this profound belief in the righteousness of its cause, the nation went to war joyously exalted, wondering at itself and its power. Its leaders had hoped, they said, that the nation was strong and sound and firmly welded together in all classes by the bands of union forged under the stress of 1870-71. They knew it now to be true. They had not been sure that what is considered a decadent age had not affected the rugged virtues; that prosperity, material and scientific success, had not somewhat palsied the ability to think in terms of the nation. The wonderful response of the people filled all doubters with joy. Not only was it unnecessary to drive a single conscript to the ranks, but two millions of men who for one reason or another had escaped military service, or had passed beyond it by reason of age, vol-



unteered, begging to be sent to the front. It is no wonder that the national motto, "*Gott Mit Uns*," was translated by Kaiser and people into that positive affirmation of the aid of the Deity which has so offended the world's on-lookers.

Yet, when the nation gazed abroad in this moment of lofty exaltation and found that Italy, her ally, held back; that Belgium also flung herself into the struggle with absolute devotion in order to protect her territory; that England joined the enemies to east and west; that Japan, who had learned her military art from Germany, obeyed the orders of England to come to her rescue in the East; that the sentiment of the United States and other neutral nations was wholly against her — it was then that a feeling of absolute incredulity gave way to absolute anger. It was the English upon whom the waves of their wrath broke primarily. They had cut the cables connecting Germany with the outside world; they it was who spread abroad the false stories that Liège held out until August 17 and that the Germans were guilty of acts of brutality. It was Eng-

land who told but half the story in her White Paper. It was England whose abstention from the war Sir Edward Grey had been ready to put up for German bidding until, driven into a corner, he refused to name his final price.

The English thus appeared before the German nation as traitorous to its civilization and culture, because its statesmen had so often described their people as "cousins across the Channel"; because there had existed the warmest cordiality and co-operation between the scientific and learned men of both countries; because they were of kindred racial stock and in their ideals nearer to one another than to France or Spain or to the Slavic power to the east. As the Germans analyzed the situation, their joint type of civilization was threatened with complete submergence by the brutal Russian forces which England had opposed at every turn since the Crimean War, against whose aspirations in the Near East the England of Gladstone had set itself like the Rock of Gibraltar; the Russia whose institutions are the exact opposite of those of liberal England; the hands of whose Romanoffs have reeked with the blood not only

of its Jews but of all Russians who sought liberty. Whatever may have been the theories of the Bernhardis and the extreme militarists, the German people as a whole felt such a kinship to the British, with whom their royal family is so closely allied, that it was almost like a stab in the back from a brother when England declared war.

Did the English, all Germany asked, not comprehend that it was *their* battle which she was fighting? To Germany, Austria was well within her rights in sending the ultimatum; its language was no harsher than the circumstances warranted. In moving to avenge the archduke, Austria did no more, as Ambassador von Bernstorff puts it, than the United States would have if emissaries of Huerta had murdered the Vice-President of the United States. Russia should have allowed Austria to punish Serbia, not only for the murder at Sarajevo, but for years of open anti-Austrian agitation bent on despoiling her of her provinces; that Russia moved proved to many a German that Russia herself was behind the Servian agitation; that Serbia was merely the Czar's cat's-paw. When Russia acted Germany was compelled to follow for two reasons:

her honor as an ally was as much involved as England's was engaged to France by the secret understanding, and she could not permit mobilization on her boundary, since her chief hope was to dispose of France before the Russian masses could be drawn up at her frontier. The possibility of war on two frontiers has never been lost sight of in Berlin; there has not been a day since 1880 that the German General Staff has not studied and restudied its plan for defending the nation against a simultaneous French and Russian attack; there has not been a day during this period that the German army has not been confident of its ability to [defeat both enemies. But to defeat them and England, too? It cannot be denied that for the moment even military Germany was staggered.

But only for a moment. Then, with a quick "The more enemies the more honor," the nation pressed on, easily persuading itself that the real underlying issue was not only Russia's position — testified to in the White Paper by Sir Edward Grey — that Austrian domination of Servia would be intolerable to her, but Russia's deter-

mination to undermine first Austria and then Germany for her own aggrandizement. For a few days the air was full of this cry of Slavic peril, that Germany stood alone against the Huns — as Western culture had once fought to keep the Turks out of Europe — until the question of Belgian neutrality thrust this into the background. That some Germans realize that her moral position would be far stronger to-day had she left Belgium untouched is deducible not merely from the chancellor's confession that she had violated a law of nations; it is admitted frankly by a few, like Professor Paul Natorp, of the University of Marburg. Yet even he has convinced himself, like all Germany, that the French would have marched in with the consent of England and of Belgium herself if the Germans had not; they are the more certain of this now that the Germans have found the telltale papers in Brussels showing that the British were plotting with the Belgians what they should do if Belgium were invaded. That French troops and officers were actually crossing the boundaries when the Germans were, and that some were already in Liège, Namur,

and Antwerp, is believed from one corner of Germany to another.

But, even if this were to be disproved, the Germans as a whole are behind the chancellor in his belief that to invade Belgium was justified by that direst necessity that knows no law. It was the only way to protect their own unfortified Belgian frontier. Why could not the Belgians have realized this and spared themselves all that they have suffered, by letting the Germans march quietly through? The Kaiser's troops would have disturbed or injured no man; they would have made good any injury done and paid handsomely as they went. For the rest of the world to cry out against what happened as a result of Belgian folly, in the manner that it has, passeth understanding from their point of view. For England to protest seems to Germany the height of hypocrisy. England standing for the rights of small nations — the same England that wiped out the Boer republics; that consented shamefully to Russia's crushing out of Persia; that connived at France's swallowing of Morocco when the ink on the treaty of Algeciras guaranteeing Moroccan integrity was



scarcely dry! Merely to state the case against "perfidious Albion" was to prove its shamelessness.

Hence the Germans have convinced themselves that England's seizing on Belgian neutrality as a reason for war was but the hollowest of shams. Everything that is now disclosed but proves in Berlin a long-planned conspiracy to ruin Germany because of her success in the world. It is envy that is at the bottom of it all, a wicked, criminal envy because German ships are filling the seas and German commerce is growing by leaps and bounds and her merchants are capturing the marts of the world hitherto the private property of John Bull. It is all so clear and plain that Germany could not understand why the rest of the world could not see it, too. "But wait," she cried, "until the German side gets out to the rest of the world, then its moral opinion will turn to our aid." Meanwhile, the question of Belgian neutrality went into the background like the Slavic peril; the stake was now the preserving of German *Kultur* (not culture, but civilization) from all the world, if need be.

## II

GERMAN *Kultur!* What this means is the riddle of the hour to many who honestly seek to fathom the Teuton point of view. Is there a German "culture" or civilization superior to any other? And is that *Kultur* typified by autocratic Prussian militarism which slashes lame cobblers and bends the nation to its own imperious will? Is it typified by the Kaiser in his war-lord moods, as when he bade the German troops departing for China carve their way to Peking with ferocity? "I have," he said, "to re-establish peace with the sword and take vengeance in a manner never before seen by the world. . . . The German flag has been insulted and the German Empire treated with contempt. This demands exemplary punishment and vengeance. . . . If you close with the enemy, remember this: Spare nobody. Make no prisoners. Use your weapons so that for a thousand years hence no Chinaman will dare look askance at any German. Open the way for civilization once more."



Or when he speaks of divine right, preaches the doctrine that might makes right, and denounces three millions of his countrymen as traitors because they wish to reconstitute the nation? Does it mean the Germany of the university professors like Treitschke, who demand not only that Germany shall have "her place in the sun" but that she shall aggressively fight for it; the professors who dream of oversea dominion, of making Germany the Rome of the twentieth century, who are so certain of the superiority of what they consider German civilization as to be ready to impose it upon all the world?

Or does this word *Kultur* stand for that other Germany that all the world has come to love and praise, the Germany of kindness and friendliness, of learned men to whom tens of thousands of Americans owe a never-ending gratitude; the Germany of poetry and music, with her rare love of nature; the Germany of humanitarian ideals that has led all the world in her efforts to solve social problems, elevated civic administration to the rank of a science and builded the city beautiful, while caring

for her poor and her aged under laws all advanced nations are copying?

To Germany herself what her *Kultur* stands for is the spirit behind *both* of these divergent Germanys, but not that which produces autocratic or militarist excesses; for it signifies the supreme expression of her life as a nation — the youngest of nations. In her brief existence she has made more positive contributions to knowledge and world-advancement than any other nation in the same period. At all times *Kultur* stands for wonderful discipline not only in the army but in party, church, and state, together with equally marvellous efficiency. To this must be added an idealism amazing in a practical people which worships the expert and has wedded industry to science. On the one hand there is a deep, warm sentimentalism and on the other a union of minute knowledge and of comprehensive grasp of fundamental principles. Finally, there must not be denied as another component part a growing belief in the necessity and glory of armaments; a demand that the nation be allowed to play a rôle as a world-power even as Spain and England in their

times. Something of a composite like this it is which Germany is defending to-day as her contribution to civilization, as even more worthy of preservation than the precise framework of government under which her citizens live; for it men and women are giving freely of all that is most precious to them.

But as they give they suddenly find themselves portrayed as barbarians, as savages without reverence for the very things that play so deep a part in their lives, and they are aghast. How is it that they can be so misunderstood? Is all the world poisoned against them? Can such frightful lies triumph? They read them on every hand — the crassest falsities, chiefly from English sources, since London is not only the greatest financial exchange but the world's clearing-house for news. They, a united people, learn from the English press that the Kaiser had deliberately ordered every Socialist member of the Reichstag shot; that Socialist mobs were shot down in the streets of Berlin; that the people who rose in patriotic exaltation never equalled in modern times were driven unwillingly to the front! Their Kaiser, beloved by

great multitudes, is portrayed as a wholesale murderer who plunged all Europe into bloody war when he could have prevented it; they themselves are pictured as slaves of a military cabal which plans the subjugation of France and England, the destruction of liberalism and the governing of Europe by an intolerable iron rule. They are told abroad that their soldiers are vandals who violate women, mutilate little children, murder in cold blood, and not merely destroy private property but priceless works of art never to be replaced — the common heritage of mankind. In brief, they are accused of the very things of which they accuse, under oath, the invading Russians who in one East Prussian district alone are charged with three hundred and fifty murders of non-combatant men and women and children.

The world, they suddenly find, believes anything of them — of them who have gone forth to war in the spirit of the crusader, not hirelings, like the British regulars, but a most democratic army of the people, united with a new spirit of brotherliness to their comrades in the ranks from all walks in life, from princes to 'prentices.

There are fathers and brothers, yes, grandfathers, in every regiment, men of years, position, title, learning, and high standing in every company, drawn together, not for plunder, not by lust of war, but to save their country, and all bound together by a discipline never approached by any other army. And of these it is said that they are like the Sioux Indians! Nothing to Germans could be worse than these slanders save what they themselves tell of the Belgians, of furies in skirts putting out with corkscrews the eyes of helpless German wounded and pouring boiling water upon them; of ununiformed citizens shooting out of cellars and from attic windows, and rising treacherously, as at Louvain, when led by priests and professors. Nothing surprises them more than that any one should look upon the burning of Louvain as anything but a just punishment for acts directly contrary to the laws of war. When their own villages have been shot to pieces and burned by Russians without its creating an outcry in America, they cannot see why the burning of Belgian villages, the natural result of shelling troops out of them, should seem anything else

than an ordinary incident of war, the hell that is war that they, under their Prussian generals, propose to make so terrible a hell by legitimate severity that their enemies will soon submit.

The fact that the Belgians lied to all the world about Liège, and similar misrepresentations, the Germans are ready to bear with as part of the game. But not the calumnies of their troops, as if they were Bulgarians or Serbs or Greek marauders. That is the last straw, and the headlines, "*Wir Barbaren*," "*Wir Unmenschen*," now appearing in the German press over records of British and French prisoners' appreciation of their kindly treatment, testify to the hurt inflicted. And so we have the German professors spurning their British decorations and academic honors, and the terrible prospect that between these two Teuton nations, which ought to be the best of friends, there will exist at the end of the war, whatever the outcome, a bitterness and a hatred beside which the latent hostility of French and Germans since 1870 will seem mere childish irritation. The Germans simply cannot understand when they hear that Englishmen of German names are changing them

because, as in one recorded case, they say that the Germans have been carrying on war "contrary to every dictate of humanity."

Conscious of their rectitude, clear as to the injury done them, certain of the triumph of their arms, their faces are now turned to the neutrals, but particularly to the great North American republic where dwell so many of German birth. With German love of thoroughness and system they have formed committees for the purpose of presenting the truth abroad. They have showered every attention upon returning Americans in the passionate belief that they will be ambassadors of good will and reporters of the right. Citizens everywhere are besought for names of friends or relatives in America to whom literature may be sent, in full faith that the United States, so ill treated by Great Britain in 1776, 1812, and during the Civil War, will particularly express its horror at the policy which has sent against their *Kultur* hordes of black, brown, and yellow troops from Africa, India, and Asia.



## III

It may, therefore, be about the hardest blow of all when Germany realizes that her representations of the facts as she sees them, and her contentions, have from the first been freely printed in the American press, together with the views of Dernburg, Münsterberg, Francke, Von Jagemann, Kühnemann, Burgess, Sloane, Ridder, Hexamer, and Ambassador Bernstorff, but that the American public as a whole continues unconvinced. The United States remains firm in its belief that the responsibility for this terrible misfortune which has overtaken humanity rests primarily with Austria and next with the Kaiser. "The final help," says the *London Times*, "is the mighty duty of America." What Germany, in its eagerness for that "final help," does not yet appreciate is that the unfavorable American judgment was based on consideration of the facts, and particularly of those relating to the invasion of Belgium. Our good opinion was forfeited by Germany when the Kaiser rejected Sir Edward Grey's offers to assure peace, when the "scrap-of-paper" incident occurred,



and when the imperial chancellor exalted the law of necessity above the law of nations.

Berlin must learn that this judgment cannot be altered either by fuller appreciation of that thrilling uprising of the Kaiser's subjects or of their unanimous belief in the justice of their cause or of their readiness to die for it. There are plenty of American men and women who recall the wonderful rallying about Lincoln in 1861. "Who that saw it," wrote James Russell Lowell, "will ever forget that enthusiasm of loyalty for the flag, and for what the flag symbolized, which twenty-six years ago swept all the country's forces of thought and sentiment, of memory and hope, into the grasp of its overmastering torrent?" In France to-day we are witnessing a less-exploited but similarly moving uprising of the people, actuated by the profound belief that it is the very existence of France which is being fought for as well as the "giving to the whole world liberty to breathe, to think, to progress." But waves of national sentiment, however they may bring tears to the eyes and quicken the heart's beat, prove nothing in themselves.

The same is true of the question of the atrocities. If the United States did or did not believe all of them, or believed none of them — even if it approved and did not profoundly disapprove the dropping of bombs without warning into defenseless cities, the exacting of ransoms, the holding of unarmed citizens as hostages, the burning of cities in revenge for individual treachery — its final opinion would not be affected by the presence or absence of these horrible phases of war. War, it knows, lets loose every evil passion, inflicts every pain and torture known to man. But all of this, as thoughtful Germany must soon come to see, can have nothing whatever to do with the fundamental moral issues involved, the right and wrong of the struggle, any more than does the question of England's consistency or her attitude in the past toward the Boer republics, Persia, and Morocco, or our own "water-cure" torturing in the Philippines. Regret that the German name is at present under a cloud the United States will; but no amount of evidence that these accusations are slanderous will achieve the real purpose of the German propaganda in

America — the turning of the United States against the Allies.

In the South African war American sympathies were chiefly with the Boers; in the Manchurian campaign overwhelmingly against Russia. If sentiment to-day favors the Allies, it is plainly not because of any thick-and-thin friendship for England or for the Czar's despotic government. As a matter of fact, had France and England violated Belgian neutrality and entered Germany by her unfortified frontier, American public sentiment would have felt just as outraged by the wrong done by Frenchmen and Englishmen. The truth is that the German General Staff knew that the easiest road into France lay through Belgium, and they took it. But one may pay too high a price even for the easiest road, and the price paid by Germany was war with Belgium, England, and Japan, and the final forfeiture of public opinion everywhere. The laying waste of Belgium, be it a legitimate incident of war or not, has stirred the world to its utmost depths. Americans cannot but believe, as they pour out sympathy and aid to this stricken people, that it was

wickedly unnecessary, and have, therefore, but restricted patience for German appeals.

The sober second thought in Germany, of which one finds traces in Professor Natorp's articles, can but reflect ere long upon the infinitely stronger position Germany would be in, even were the steps leading to the conflict the same, had it fought a defensive war. Many defeats will probably be necessary to shatter German faith in the divine wisdom of its General Staff, whose officers had decided for years past that the best policy was that quick overwhelming of France which so nearly succeeded. The time must come, however, when Germans will wish with all their hearts that by keeping out of Belgium they had saved themselves three or four opponents and thereby held in some degree the sympathy of the United States. The position of the German and Allied armies at this writing shows a truth we had begun to suspect by the close of our Civil War, that well-trained troops behind breastworks are a better means of defense than the best forts. No one can be found to believe that if Germany's soldier millions had merely lined their own fron-

tiers and waged a defensive campaign behind forts, or trenches where there were no forts, France and Russia, fighting alone, could have made headway against her. The horrible losses of the raid into France would have been avoided and the control of the sea would indubitably be hers. There would have been no charges of vandalism or soldier misconduct to combat and to deplore. Plainly a Bismarck *was* needed, not only on the diplomatic side, but on the military side as well. Upon the General Staff the blame for this utterly mistaken policy will eventually rest.

By this it is not meant to imply that even in this supposititious case Americans would have been altogether on the side of Germany. For all our recent imperialistic excursions into Central and South America and the Philippines, despite our dangerously large navy, the spirit of our people is still as opposed to great military establishments as in the first days of the Republic. As ex-President Eliot has put it: "The reliance on military force as the foundation of true national greatness seems to thinking Americans erroneous, and in the long run degrading to

a Christian nation." It is probably true, as German speakers contend, that Bernhardt's book no more represents the real heart and mind of Germany than the vaporings of Congressman Hobson and the belligerent tracts of the pseudo-"Lieutenant-General" Homer Lea really reflect the sentiment of the common people of America. To accept the teachings of books like these is to admit that mankind is well along on its return to the stone age. But every military system produces men who worship war as war, believe it to be the normal state of man, and assert that there is no safety for any people but to make a soldier of every citizen. The German army has them in plenty, and, however democratic it may be in its ranks, it is controlled by a clique of professional soldiers who, standing quite apart from the aspirations of the plain people, have, as now appears, made great strides toward dominating the nobler Germany and giving to its foreign policy an aggressive jingo note. Victory now would enormously strengthen the hands of the Treitschkes and Bernhardis, with whom the Crown Prince seems in such complete sympathy.

No one can confute this merely by asserting that this is not a war of the Kaiser but of the whole German people, or by pointing out that in the haste to serve the Fatherland the two Germanys are now as one. In war-time there is always the demand that all differences of opinion be sunk and consciences stifled.

No true friend of Germany in the United States can wish for her any success that will convince the masses of her people that true national greatness depends solely on military power. To do so means positive infidelity to our own institutions — and to humanity. If there are those who preach this doctrine that true national worth is measured by the relative perfection of a military machine and the number of battleships, they sojourn among us but are not of us. They are ignorant as to a chief teaching of the Republic; they are grossly untrue to the Germans of '48 who fled to us when the Prussian militarists blew to pieces that noble uprising and ended that brave if hopeless demand for true democracy. Whether the Germans, blinded by the *Sturm und Drang* they are now passing through, can perceive it or not,



German victory would spell the strengthening of absolutism everywhere and of its bond-servant militarism. It would mean the subordination of the nobler Germany to the reactionary. It would mean not a Germany to be beloved and honored of all thinking men, but a Germany to be feared and dreaded, with all liberal tendencies crushed within her. Her chief aspiration would then, perhaps, be fresh territories to conquer and certainly more and more sacrifices for the military machine. Against this possibility Americans must protest the louder the more they are indebted to Germany, the more they admire her, the more they pity her, the greater the anguish they feel that the very existence of this nation of Kant, Goethe, Schiller, Wagner, and all the rest of its really great men has been recklessly staked in a war utterly unnecessary, about whose real causes no man is clear. The more he loves Germany the more the real American must pray that she be saved from the dangerous forces within her which are threatening to overwhelm what is best in her. She must be shown that what is going on to-day is a denial of Christianity and nothing else. Her splen-



did abilities, her powers of organization, her sentiment, her idealism, the world needs for the prevention of wars and not for the deification of the war spirit.

Americans who believe in self-government and democracy can take but one stand against absolutism and arbitrary power. They trust that as a result of this war thrones will everywhere come crashing to the ground. In Germany we must hope for a reawakening of the spirit of 1848 which will recognize at least wherein lies the great power of the United States in this hour. It rests not in the number of our battleships nor in the size of our army, but in our moral power; in the vigor of our democratic institutions, in the fact that this country loves justice, truth, and right; that the judgments of its common people are, in the long run, profoundly wise; that that judgment to-day is swayed neither by entangling alliances, nor by the lust of conquest, nor by the blasphemous doctrine that God is on the side of the largest battalions. If America is to-day, in this world crisis, the court of last instance, it is judging honestly on the facts and the facts alone.

## II

### THE TWO GERMANYS

**W**HAT attitude conscientious German-Americans should take toward the war of nations was from the first a cause of no end of heart-break. For one thing, there was no Carl Schurz to lead the way in this emergency by one of those clear-cut ethical analyses with which he did so much to simplify and to clarify difficult political problems for our countrymen of German birth or parentage, as well as for native Americans, plenty of whom, for one reason or another, find themselves in debt to German learning or German kindness. Should they imitate the bulk of the German-American multitudes who are shouting, "Germany, right or wrong!" and waive all effort to place the blame by some such conscience salve as the phrase, "The Kaiser has sources of information not open to the public, and knew he had to strike or be overwhelmed"?

There are plenty of other reasons given in defense of the Kaiser, as we have seen. He is a new St. George slaying the Slavic dragon. He himself — so it is solemnly alleged — is responsible for those extraordinary conquests on the seas and in the marts of the world which have aroused British jealousy, and he must be trusted to know how to protect what he has created, and how to insure still greater conquests of trade. Is he not the true protector of Germany's faith in herself, of her intellectual aspirations, and of the superb idealism of his people? Is it not patent that every man's hand has been raised against Germany because, as the Kaiser puts it, God has been with her — she has prospered exceedingly and the wicked now rejoice that evil days have come upon her? And should not German-Americans rally to her support even though they are loyal to the United States, even though her diplomacy has been at fault — even if the mistake in attacking Belgium was a terrible one? Right or wrong, should not one stand up for the Fatherland at this distance, just as the masses are called upon to in every country when it plunges into war?

What intensifies the difficulty of the thoughtful German-American is that there are those two Germanys to whose blending are due her *Kultur* and the animating spirit of the nation. However much some may deny, in view of the attitude of the German professors and the submission to the war-craze of the Social-Democrats, that there are two Germanys, they exist none the less, even though temporarily welded together by the war, and they will be in evidence whatever the outcome. In a recent German gathering in New York there was but one voice of indignation at the aspersions upon Germany and her motives; suddenly in a lull a voice was heard to say: "But when it's all over we *must* drive out our *Junker*." That one word stands for the reactionary forces in the empire, for those who believe in the divine right of rulers, in the mailed fist, in government by aristocracy, in might as against right, and have taught the doctrine that peace can only be assured if all the nations be armed to the teeth. Its adherents are those who see in the *Waffenrock* a garment before which the public must bow. They uphold the officers who run

civilians through at some fancied insult, and applaud those wearers of the uniform who resort to the duel, long since outlawed by the enlightened sentiment of the world. The *Junker* and their allies among the privileged are the Germans who intrench in power the ennobled and enriched classes; who are without trust in the people and are utterly opposed to the extension of democracy, relying for aid upon a subservient bureaucracy. It is they who demand protective tariffs, who place such difficulties in the way of free importation of food as to make it practically impossible for thousands upon thousands of Germans to taste any meat save horseflesh. They are the all-powerful supporters of the Prussian Government in its refusal to remove the inequalities among voters within its electorate — against which one hundred thousand Prussians protested two years ago on a single day — for they are in power by reason of those inequalities.

Incidentally they are of the type that gives so much offense to the rest of the world. They are arrogant and supercilious, and frankly without faith in anything save the power of the

sword. It is they who have dictated the foreign policy which has made friends of practically nobody. It is they who, under Bismarck's leadership, originally entered in 1882 the game of taking the lands of backward races, in which all their neighbors and we ourselves have indulged. It is they who give the utterly false impression that all Germany has been bent on conquering where it could. It is they who make a large part of the world forget that the Germans are among the most lovable, useful, and enlightened of peoples; that they are bound to us Americans by ties that ought to be indissoluble. Have they not enriched our blood? Did they not come to us by the hundred thousand, fleeing from home because of a noble idealism which they transferred to our country, pledging their faith with their blood upon our battle-fields of civil strife — but always on the side of the Union and human liberty? Surely no German-American who really believes in republican institutions and popular government can uphold this imperialistic Germany.

There is a Germany other than that of the *Junker*, totally different, infinitely nobler. It is



the Germany of great souls, with its thinkers, its teachers, its scientists, its civic administrators, its poets, its glorious musicians, its philosophers, and its idealists. From them hosts of our teachers, our professional men without number, and others in every rank of life have drawn their most cherished inspirations. To her we owe in considerable measure our university development; from her came in large degree the impetus toward good civic government which has been one of the glories of our American progress in the last two decades. From this Germany Lloyd George has plagiarized those plans for the improvement of the welfare of the masses which have made him at once the best-beloved and best-hated man in Great Britain.

In the civic care of her own this Germany has led the world, with all to do her reverence. She has known best how to build the city beautiful, and made good and progressive government the birthright of all her urban dwellers. In no other nation has science in the same degree become the partner of commerce and of industry. Nowhere else has there been a keener intellectual freedom among those whose lives are dedicated

to the pursuit of truth, or to the instruction of the young. Nowhere has there been a greater reverence for the aristocracy of intellect, or as generous a recognition of its achievements. To sit at the feet of its inspired teachers, men and women have come from all quarters of the globe, knowing that in a hundred fields this Germany leads the world.

And it is this Germany which to-day lies prostrate before us. It is this Germany which is being slaughtered, whatever the reason or the excuse for the war. On behalf of this Germany any really enlightened ruler must have stood for peace against the world, no matter who might be mobilizing, or where — at least until attacked, and her soil clearly invaded. To the support of this kingdom of the soul the whole intellectual world would have risen — it did in England — had the Kaiser but cried out its need and asked for allies to defend, and not to break, the peace. For it any one who realized its moral grandeur and worth ought to have been willing to abdicate rather than to plunge it into the abyss, the hell of war.

But there it lies to be ravaged by its defenders



and its enemies at will. For it there can be no victory, whoever wins. Let there be no mistake about that, whatever one hears about the glorious courage of her soldiers, and their possible conquests. It is not only the laws which are silent between arms; all intellectual and spiritual activities cease when men's sole thoughts are to kill, to destroy, to immolate, to make a mockery of Christianity. A whole generation is being wiped out; the flower of the land between the ages of nineteen and twenty-four is to be sacrificed by a despotic ruler's decision; perhaps another Goethe, a Schumann, a Helmholtz, are to be cut off in their youth; all the talents these boys possess are certain to go for naught. Those who survive are to be brutalized by the most frightful spectacle of human carnage the world has ever seen — by a sudden reversion to barbarism. If the troops of the Kaiser prove to be the better drilled and led so as to kill the greater number of their fellow human beings, intellectual Germany will not profit but will suffer thereby.

It is not merely that her spiritual growth has been checked, and that the pursuit of knowledge

is at an end. A terrible blow has been struck at Germany as the seat of wisdom. International bonds of infinite worth have been sundered not to be reunited for decades to come; the Germany of calm, scientific reasoning has been submerged by the mad rush into a war in which the Kaiser has staked the empire itself, as well as every achievement of the nation-builders of 1870, and of those who have erected the great commercial edifice which has been the wonder of the world. If there have been envy and jealousy among the other nations, will not these feelings give way to helpless rage, to permanent enmity, if the greatest of military machines should triumph? Will not there be another Napoleon only a shade less dangerous than the overlord of a century ago, to inspire distrust and to court another Waterloo? And if Germany is conquered and lies prostrate in sackcloth and ashes, what endless humiliation will be hers! What dreams of revenge upon all the world may not then fill the minds of those who, in such a spirit of exaltation, set out to humble their sister nations to East and West? Is it not certain that, whatever the outcome,

Germany will for decades be among the most hated of nations? Worst of all, every reactionary element in the German Empire, every privileged class, every believer in the divine right of the few who have obtained power, will profit.

Here is precisely where a chief wickedness of the war lies. More than four millions of German citizens are affiliated with the Social-Democratic party. These "traitors" now have been forced into the ranks, but the evils against which they protested bulk as large to them, their devotion to their cause is the same. They have fought autocracy at every turn, only to be bound and delivered now by the old snares, the old teachings that one's country must be upheld in war-time; that it is proper to commit murder if one but murders by wholesale — teachings that are to-day doing their antichristian work in England, France, Russia, and Austria as well. It is the *Junker*, the grasping landlords, the insolent tariff barons, a bigoted Catholic clergy as in Bavaria, and the military and the aristocratic castes who do more to recruit the Socialist party than all their own leaders combined. Whether one be oneself

a Socialist or not, for their democratic strivings America must have complete sympathy. What have they to gain by this war save the privilege of additional military service if Germany wins, and greater and greater tax burdens?

For them the war spells so obviously the checking of their cause as to make many wonder if this foreseeable fact was not one of the motives of those who welcomed it and brought it on. Let no one be deceived by the superficial assertion that as Germany rose to imperial riches and greatness after the war of 1870-71 so she will rise still further as a result of this one. The earlier struggle was but child's play compared with this, while there were economic forces at work which, together with the final abolition of customs and trade barriers between the states of the empire, accounted for that great growth after 1871, but cannot come to the rescue now. A foreign war — how often has it not come to the aid of endangered forces of privilege even when not deliberately sought? How often has it not weakened and checked the onslaughts of liberalism?

Will it long avail to tell the dissenting Germans that the Slavic peril must be combated; that in this world-war Destiny speaks and that it had to come sooner or later? Doctor Liebknecht's daring revolt in the Reichstag seems to indicate that it will not. Are they not inevitably to count the cost when the slaughter is over? Will they not more than ever cling to the party of "treason" which dictates that such things shall not be? Will they not turn to any one who teaches that it shall be taken out of the hands of one man or a group of men to say whether a nation shall return to barbarism and slay the best that is in it? If they do not, then will the obsession of this frightful struggle have taken a deeper hold than can be believed to-day. Surely the German masses must be utterly blinded if they do not ask themselves more than ever whether it is because of a government by the few that such national catastrophes are possible; whether it is not in spite of such autocratic government, however benevolent and however efficient along certain civic and military lines it may be, that the liberal, the cultured Germany of to-day is what it is.

What might it not be if its intellectual freedom were to be typical of the freedom of the masses? How much greater might not be the spiritual kingdom which it has built for itself under these conditions? How much happier would be the masses of the people!

The masses of the Kaiser's empire! To them surely the sympathy of the world must go out as to the poor Belgians who have died before the invaders without knowing why, realizing only that a hell of shot and shell had burst without warning upon them as lightning from the sky. On the heads of the German masses lies not the blood-guilt. They come from smiling homes, from the castled hills of Thuringia, the vine-clad banks of the Rhine, the plains of Prussia, the popped fields of Bavaria. They and their kind have been rising steadily against fearful odds, helped on by favorable social legislation, held back by the heavy taxes imposed by the military Moloch, and by their three years of army service; hampered in the cities by grinding poverty and checked everywhere by iron castes. Their villages have just begun to grow, to give signs of a development

corresponding to that of the cities; to the peasants have come at least the harbingers of social justice; something of the prosperity of the nation was beginning to be theirs. But now the mother of every able-bodied son must know her boy is upon the firing-line to destroy the sons of some other mother — because the “Triple” Alliance demanded it. For these solid peasants, the backbone of the country, war can bring nothing save woe and debt.

For a German-American whose heart goes back to the country that gave him or his fathers birth, there should be no difficulty in deciding where his sympathies should lie. Sorrow as he must for the German masses, if he places reason above emotion and sympathy, he can but withhold his support from the Kaiser who made no better than a dicer’s oath the solemn promise of the empire to respect the neutrality of Belgium. If he has owed anything to the great minds of Germany, her men of peace, of knowledge, science, and art, let him now pay the debt of being true to their ideals, however far some groups of them may be drifting from their anchorages, deluded by false visions of glory



and of what constitutes genuine national nobility. He might well remember that Goethe himself faced a German army, when it had been beaten by ragged French republicans, to assure it that then and there a new epoch had begun. Another new epoch has begun for Germany; the fates have grievous days in store for her. However difficult it may be, the German-American must think out for himself what is going to be best for Germany in the long run, and ask whether victory by force of arms would not injure the ideal he holds for the Fatherland far more than would a chastening defeat. If he does this conscientiously from the American and the republican view-point, there should be but one answer.



### III

## GERMAN MILITARISM AND DEMOCRACY

**N**INETY-THREE German savants who pledged their honor and reputation to the truth of their statements have recently declared that German militarism is one and indivisible with German culture. "Without it," they said, "our culture would long since have been wiped off the earth." From many other German sources come denials that Germany's militarism is a menace to the peace of Europe or to anybody else. It is defended, moreover, not only as a cultural but as a democratic institution. Germans are to-day thanking God for their militarism, on the ground that but for it Napoleon would never have been humbled and the German Empire would never have come to pass; that to its extent and thoroughness alone Germany owes her safety at

this hour, when she is beset by the troops of nearly half the world, but has thus far carried on the war almost entirely on other people's soil. It is therefore worth while for Americans to examine this German institution carefully, particularly as we are already being told by certain soothsayers that the war convicts England of folly in not having resorted to universal conscription, and places upon us the duty of still greater military burdens, since by some occult reasoning it is apparent to them that if Germany wins we are to be the next victims of her aggrandizing ambition.

Like the nation itself, the German army is curiously two-sided, for it is both a democracy and an autocracy, but with the autocracy on top. It is a democracy because within its regiments are men of every rank and caste, of every grade of learning and every degree of poverty and wealth. It is democratic because it is compulsory and because it spares none. No amount of "pull" or power can free a German from his year or more of service; if he escapes, it is because the army's draft for the year when he becomes liable for service is so large that all

cannot be cared for in the existing organizations, or because some physical disability insures his exemption. Thus, when the call to arms came on the 4th of August it was literally an uprising of the people. The great wave of emotion which exalted the whole nation gained its impetus because men of every class went forth, singing, to die. Barriers of all kinds were levelled; in the enthusiasm of that tremendous hour, caste and rank were, for the moment, forgotten. The entire citizenship was drawn together by the levelling influence of devotion to a single cause. For the moment all Germany was a democracy, and democratic were the forces which stormed Liège, and swept like irresistible gray-green waves of the sea through Brussels, until they were nearly in sight of the defenses of Paris.

In the trenches to-day lie side by side, as common soldiers or non-commissioned officers, men who have made their mark in the field of learning, or science, or business, or the skilled professions. Some reserve regiments would seem to be a cross-section of the population. One of its lieutenants may be of humble origin, a minor official, let us say, in the Dresdner Bank;

servicing with him may be a reserve lieutenant who drafted last year one of the most important bills ever laid before the Reichstag. A reserve non-commissioned officer who reports to them may be a survivor of the twenty-six Socialist deputies to the Reichstag who found the call of conventional patriotism far more compelling than the peace principles of their party. A lieutenant next to them may bear the plebeian name of Wilhelm Müller, yet be one of the ablest junior officials of the Colonial Office, for the moment bedfellow with a police officer of Berlin who has exchanged the pursuit of criminals for the pursuit of the French. Next in line may be a university professor of distinction, a painter for whom great things are prophesied, a musician of note, and with them may be serving apprentices, laborers, street-cleaners, conductors, hod-carriers — men from every humble and honorable walk in life. It is reported that the Kaiser recently met a soldier of the Landwehr driving a lot of hogs, whose presence on the road stopped the royal motor. To the Kaiser's delight, when he asked the spectacled herdsman whether he was a farmer in time of peace, he

answered: "No, your Majesty, I am a professor in the University of Tübingen."

There is similarly no discrimination among regiments when war is on; as far as this the General Staff's democracy extends. Whatever the prestige of a regiment in peace times, whether it be the Garde du Corps, the crack cavalry regiment, or the Death's Head Hussars, until lately commanded by the Crown Prince, or one of the Imperial Infantry Guards, it meets with no other consideration than that of the most plebeian infantry regiment when the fighting is under way. It makes no difference if every officer in it is of ancient and noble lineage. The Guards are reported to have been among the heaviest losers in the present war, precisely as at St. Privat in 1870, when five battalions lost every officer, and were fighting under their sergeants when the day was won. It is just the same with the Kaiser's younger sons; they have gone into the actual welter of battle exactly as if offspring of the humblest Westphalian peasant, Prince Joachim being wounded by shrapnel and Prince Oscar collapsing from exhaustion and heart weakness after a charge at

the head of his regiment against Turcos, whose bullets laid low most of his regimental officers. The Crown Prince may be safe by reason of his being the nominal commander of an army, but his brothers are alive to-day only by the fortunes of war. Not unnaturally the German press has drawn biting contrasts between the sons of the Kaiser and the Prince of Wales, who, it was officially announced in England, was at twenty not sufficiently trained as a soldier to go to the front until three and a half months of war had passed. That the privilege of dying as the German General Staff wills belongs to princes as much as to anybody else is attested by the death of Lieutenant-General Frederick Prince of Saxe-Meiningen, a brother-in-law of the Kaiser's sister, and of other notables.

But the brief for the democracy of the German army does not end here. It enforces, so its adherents claim, a fine standard of personal conduct, of physical vigor, and of loyalty to King and country throughout the nation. The army takes the humblest conscript, however ignorant and lacking in self-respect, and turns him out a decent, healthy citizen with a fine

physique, excellent carriage, inured to heavy burdens, long marches, and absolute obedience. If he is a dull clodhopper from a Polish province, unable to speak German, the recruit is taught his King's language and how to write it; he learns, as Kipling puts it, to "wash behind his ears," how to eat, how to walk, how to keep himself scrupulously neat, and how to think for himself.

The great lesson of subordination to authority is thus learned, and in many cases self-restraint, as a result of methods which are applied just as rigorously to the son of a millionaire or of an aristocrat. The natural German love of outdoors and of exercise in the open is intensified by service with the colors; a genuine comradeship with men in all walks of life springs up, and with it comes the ability to feel as a German, to think in terms of the nation, whose patriotic songs one and all sing as they march, for singing is a wise requirement of the German military training. Certainly, as the English military reports have so generously attested, this training teaches men to face certain death for the Fatherland with a devotion never sur-



passed by Occidentals and equalling the stoical and fatalistic pursuance of death by Orientals. Again, the wonderful thoroughness of the military machine leaves its impress upon all who are for a time of its cogs, and to it is attributed some of that unequalled efficiency of the Germans to which the nation owes its extraordinary national rise and prosperity. The army is, in other words, regarded as a vital part of the great German system of education.

If this were all, to be said of German militarism, its case would be, perhaps, won. England and the United States might then be tempted to add a similar course to their educational system. But there is the other side.

It is hard to conceive of a closer corporation or a more autocratic body than the German General Staff; it is the army to which it gives the dominating note. It is a group of aggressive, hard-working, exceptionally able officers, envied by soldiers all over the world because the nation does as they tell it. In 1913, when they demanded one hundred and forty thousand more men, the war minister acted as their spokes-



man, and the Reichstag hardly questioned; the bulk of the Socialists, foreshadowing their desertion of their peace principles, acquiesced by a cowardly approval or dodged by a refusal to vote. For the first time, after this vote the tax-gatherer knocked at German doors not to take a share of the income, but some of the citizens' capital, and no one protested. To question the General Staff would be like questioning the Deity, a fact which explains why, the General Staff having declared that it was essential to invade Belgium, nobody in all Germany doubts that decision. One may start controversies over sacred theology in the Kaiser's domains, but not one as to the all-embracing wisdom of the General Staff, for on that there have never been two opinions since 1866 up to the time of this writing. When the deadly forty-two-centimetre guns were planned, the *Grosser Generalstab* asked the Reichstag for a large appropriation and obtained it without disclosing in any degree the purpose for which it was asked. It was enough that the war minister declared the *Generalstab* must have it for a purpose too secret and too important to be intrusted to

the Reichstag committee on army estimates or to any but the inner ring of the army.

It is that inner ring which settles the fate of an officer after he has reached colonel's rank. Let one be overslaughed and he resigns at once. Let him blunder in the manoeuvres and his "papers" go forward promptly; the General Staff sees to that. Physical efficiency is insisted upon as well as mental. An officer may be as dissipated as he pleases but he must be on hand with a clear head for the five-o'clock spring and summer march-out of his regiment. His habits and customs may be deserving of all sorts of censure, but if he studies diligently, passes his examinations well, has good efficiency reports, and is altogether *ein schneidiger Offizier* his superiors will say nothing. There is no age limit as in our army, as is evidenced by the prevalence of men approaching seventy in high positions to-day. Thus, Generals von Kluck, von Hausen, and von Bülow are sixty-eight; Generals von Moltke and von Emmich, the latter the capturer of Liège, are sixty-six; and Field-Marshal von Hindenburg is sixty-seven. But to hold their positions men like these must

be vigorous physically and mentally, agreeable to the General Staff, and absolute upholders of the existing military traditions and order.

By this we do not mean that each general must be a follower of Bernhardt. Many of the German generals probably never saw his book nor even heard of it. But they must subscribe fervently to the overbearing pretensions of the military clique, to the autocratic attitude of the army toward the civilian and the nation. They must carry themselves as members of an exalted caste whose adoration of their uniform borders on pagan worship. Take the case of Colonel von Reuter, who commanded the Ninety-ninth Infantry, stationed at Zabern, in Alsace, and was acquitted in January of last year (1914) of the charges of illegal assumption of the executive power, illegal imprisonment of civilians, and the invasion of private houses in order to make arrests. This was at the time when his young officers, whom one could hardly accuse of being democratic in spirit, were sabring or persecuting the civilians, who were driven almost to revolt by the overbearing arrogance of the military. Colonel von Reuter himself openly

and aggressively stated on his trial that if matters had gone any farther he would have turned his machine-guns, which stood ready in the courtyard of the barracks, on the populace. "Blood may flow," he had threatened at the crucial moment, "for we are protecting the prestige and the honor of the whole army and the gravely shaken authority of the government." "I was convinced that our government was allowing its reins to drag on the ground," he told the court, and so, in the name of autocracy, he assured the public prosecutor that "jurisprudence ends here," and declared martial law.

A court of high officers sustained Colonel von Reuter and his subordinates on the ground that a decree issued by the King of Prussia in 1820 — not a law — gave the military the right to intervene, without waiting for a request from civil authority, if they deemed the time had come to act. More than that, the army expressly upheld the arrogant acts of the officers, for whom the judge-advocate never asked more than a week's or three days' imprisonment as punishment! Colonel von Reuter is reported

to have won the Iron Cross; and the young officer who sabred the lame cobbler of Zabern is also at the front, but not, let us trust, in the name of democracy. In defending Colonel von Reuter, the minister of war, General von Falkenhayn, who has been acting as chief of staff during the recent temporary illness of General von Moltke, declared that, while the colonel might have exceeded his authority at times, his acts, nevertheless, saved his officers from the necessity of running their swords through the insulting civilians in order to protect the honor of the "Kaiser's Coat." This coat — hardly a democratic garment — thus inevitably recalls Gessler's hat; the General Staff means that there shall be no vital difference between the deference asked of Wilhelm Tell and that which the German civilian owes to the "gay coat" of the military. Officers have frequently been applauded and acquitted, or at most imprisoned in a fortress for a few weeks, for stabbing civilians or killing them in duels that are against the law but are often forced upon officers by decrees of the regimental courts of honor, whose ideals of conduct are direct inheritances from

the days of Frederick the Great. If the full story of these courts of honor could be written, it would astound people everywhere.

In brief, the army is a narrow caste with professional ideals of a bygone time, scrupulously maintained in the face of modern progress by the ruling clique. From its highest officers, its General Staff, its Crown Prince, as well as its Kaiser, the army takes its tone as a bulwark of the privileged classes, to whom anything that smacks of democracy is anathema. It is the chief pillar of the great landlords, the *Junker*, and the aristocrats, as it is of the throne. When the Reichstag passed a vote of censure on the government because of the Zabern affair, an almost unheard-of thing, the government simply ignored the vote. Doubtless the imperial chancellor and General von Falkenhayn, the censured ministers, smile to-day if they think of this incident, and reflect how completely the war has placed the Reichstag, the Social-Democrats, and all the rest of the civilians in their power. There being no responsible ministry to fall in Germany, the fate of the nation has rested — less than a year after their



censure by the national parliament — in their and the Kaiser's hands. As for the Kaiser and the Crown Prince, who publicly upheld Colonel von Reuter, they may for the moment be democrats, but the only reason why they do not fear the Social-Democrats, whom a few years ago the Kaiser denounced as traitors to the country, is the existence of the army. General von Falkenhayn declared in the Reichstag, in December, 1913, that "without the army not a stone of the Reichstag building would remain in place." Is there any doubt that this democratic organization of eight hundred thousand men would close the doors of the Reichstag if the Kaiser so ordered? Did not the grandfathers of those now in the trenches in the Imperial Guard regiments crush out the republican uprising in 1848?

In this anti-democratic tendency the German army is not different from any other. The same trend toward caste and autocracy is noticeable, to greater or less degree, in every army; even a study of the social life of our American navy would prove this. If England creates a great standing army the same phenomena will

be still more manifest than in her present regular force, which has been about the most undemocratic machine thinkable. The social, court, and petticoat influences that controlled the British service down to the Boer War have been known of all informed men. It took this present war, with its overwhelming need for officers, to break down the barriers of caste erected against the common soldier. Lord Kitchener did an unheard-of thing recently when he advanced one hundred and twenty-five sergeants and corporals to lieutenancies in a single issue of the official *Gazette*, yet no one would describe Lord Kitchener as an apostle of democracy. The nature of an army and its very organization are undemocratic; the whole basis is a hierarchy with the power centring in one head.

Of course, the autocratic nature of an army is not affected by the bourgeois antecedents of some of its officers. In Germany a man of plainest lineage, be he a good soldier, can rise to high rank. Of the active officers prior to the outbreak of war, 5.3 per cent were the sons of minor officials or of non-commissioned officers; that is, they came of families with no particular



social position. A number of the German corps commanders are to-day commoners who do not write *von* before their names. But they must have inherited or married means in order to hold their present positions, since German officers cannot live on their pay. To no regiment can an officer be appointed until he has been voted on by his future comrades, just as if he were entering a select club. This may make for harmony and for efficiency, but he would be rash who would assert that it smacked of democracy. Of the rest of the corps of officers, as it existed at the beginning of 1914, 9.7 per cent were sons of large landed proprietors, while 62.5 were sons of army officers, of civilian officials, of judges, and of members of the learned professions. Only 15.1 per cent were sons of business men; the remainder, comprising 6.3 per cent, represented a varied group of occupations.

Of course, many regiments are wholly closed to men without title. The bourgeois officers go to the least desirable regiments, and Jews are, of course, quite good enough to be reserve officers, and serve as *Kannonenfutter*, whenever the General Staff pleases. But none hitherto

have been regimental officers, and none have risen to high rank in the staff departments to which they have been admitted as officers. Yet these are not the only undemocratic discriminations. Such newspapers as the Jewish *Frankfurter Zeitung* and the *Berliner Tageblatt*, as well as the Socialist *Vorwärts* — the *Frankfurter* and the *Tageblatt* are now unreservedly upholding the war and the army — have in the past filled columns upon columns with discreet criticisms of the military. When the army increase was voted last year certain Socialists took the opportunity to criticise the favoritism in regulations shown to the Imperial Guards. Of course, they accomplished nothing. Why should the General Staff pay attention to mere members of the Reichstag, and Socialists at that? In a democratic organization criticism of the organization is permitted; none is tolerated in the German army. When an exceptionally able military critic of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, Colonel Gädke, a retired officer, undertook to criticise the service, the military authorities tried to deprive him of his right to sign as “former colonel” of an artillery regiment. That he is not figuring

as a correspondent or critic now has perhaps some connection with this incident. Any effort to effect reforms in the army is certain to encounter grave obstacles. Did not the late General Bronsart von Schellendorf, one of the ablest war ministers Germany has had, fail utterly in 1893-96, despite his high office, in his effort to reform the army's court procedure and system of punishments?

If there is any atmosphere in which democracy does not flourish it is that of a Continental barracks. German discipline is unyielding as iron. The power of the officer is absolute and that of the non-commissioned officer little less so. The men in the ranks change completely every three years, but the non-commissioned officers are usually professional soldiers for a long term, who know the ropes well. The conditions are such that brutal ones among them can make existence a hell for any man they do not like. Just as it is hard to prevent some hazing at West Point, so there is always some in the German barracks. It is often almost impossible to checkmate brutality among the non-commissioned officers, because the presumption

is always in favor of authority; so there are occasionally suicides in the barracks, frequently desertions, and sometimes trials of men finally caught in ill-treating subordinates. When Rosa Luxemburg, the fiery Socialist orator, declared at Freiburg last year (1914), in speaking of the case of a horribly abused soldier at Metz, "It is certainly one of those dramas which are enacted day in and day out in German barracks, although the groans of the actors seldom reach our ears," General von Falkenhayn, as war minister, prosecuted the "Red Rosa" for libelling the army. The case was promptly dropped when her counsel announced that they proposed to call one thousand and thirty eye-witnesses to such wrong-doing, mostly in the form of "slaps in the face, punches and kicks, beating with sheathed sabres and bayonets, with riding-whips and harness straps; forcible jamming of ill-set helmets on the wearer's head; compulsory baths in icy water, followed by scrubbing down with scrub-brushes until the blood ran; compulsory squatting in muscle-straining attitudes until the victim collapsed or wept for pain; unreasonable fatigue drill, and

so on. There were also abundant cases of absurd and humiliating punishments inflicted by non-commissioned officers, such as turning the men out of bed and making them climb to the top of cupboards or sweep out the dormitory with tooth-brushes." Now, single men in barracks are never plaster saints, as Kipling, the exalter of British militarism and hater of German militarism, has made quite clear to us. Sporadic cases of abuse happen in our own American barracks; but no one will, it is to be hoped, assert that in this phase of its existence the German army even faintly suggests a democracy.

This army has had its Dreyfus case, too, though the victim was not an officer, but a Sergeant Martin who on a second trial was found guilty, on circumstantial evidence, of killing his captain. The two civilian members of the court found him not guilty; the prosecutor asked only for imprisonment, but the military judges pronounced the death sentence in addition to imprisonment. They felt they must uphold their caste, right or wrong. A lieutenant stationed at Memel was found to

have beaten a soldier so severely with a sword that his victim had to be dropped from the military service, compensated, and pensioned for injuries "incident to the service." Not that the other type of officer is lacking. As the writer knows by personal experience, there are plenty of kindly, gifted, and charming officers who are neither fire-eaters nor war-worshippers, who write no jingo books and do not subscribe to Bernhardi. They despise the intrigues, the narrowness, and frequent immorality of the small garrison, and the dissipation of life in the big cities. They recognize the antiquated character of the code of honor, but they are helpless to change it, and as they grow older the more ready they are to think an intense militarism the normal condition of society. If there are many officers of this type, particularly in the South German armies, the trend is, however, toward the overbearing arrogance of the Von Reuters, which is again merely saying that militarism unchecked and unsubordinated to civilian control will run to excesses everywhere. The note of Bernhardi has been more and more often heard with the cry that war is the natural state



of man and that the German army is for war. It is quite possible that the Kaiser, in the last moments before the war, was overborne against his better judgment by the General Staff clique with which he is surrounded, and signed the fatal order practically under compulsion. But there were thousands of his officers who went to the war exulting that the time had come at last when their years of devoted study and ceaseless training, unsurpassed in its comprehensiveness and its intensity, were to give way to the practical application of all they had learned as to man-killing.

The spirit of arrogance and aristocracy so characteristic of the extreme Prussian militarists has penetrated even further than into the South German armies. It has made itself felt in civil life in increasing measure, as is only natural. When men, by reason of the coat they wear, deem themselves sacrosanct and especially privileged, they are bound to have imitators in plenty, not only among those subordinated to them, but those whose garments are of the ununiformed multitude. The aggressive tone of the typical lieutenant is quickly caught, and so is his



total lack of consideration for others. For instance, the rules of his caste make it impossible for him to carry a bundle or a bag for his wife, so she must lug it by his side, and there are many similarly odd customs. The habits of officers of the fashionable regiments do not help a young officer to a real respect for womankind, and the frequent marriage-à-la-mode for money to pay debts, or to support one's station in military life, does not tend toward morality or happiness. If he escape these perils, the young officer is in danger of becoming the conceited or silly snob whom the *Fliegende Blätter* satirizes so perfectly.

No one has yet, however, measured the whole effect of these tendencies upon the German nation. The roughness and the coarseness of the barracks and the supercilious attitude of the officers as a class are without doubt in part responsible for the arrogance and bad manners which are so often noticed by foreigners in German travellers, and are freely deprecated by the more refined and thoughtful Germans. One meets Americans and English in numbers abroad who can also be trying indeed; no country, alas, has a monopoly of purse-proud

travelling *nouveaux riches* or vulgar vacation-trippers; but many observers of Germany during the last three decades have been struck with the fact that German bad manners often go hand in hand with an assumption of superiority which is extremely trying, and may properly be connected with a similar military manner that an American often finds utterly unbearable. Among the masses, upon whom the three-year military service does have some excellent effects, their schooling under the overbearing non-commissioned officers is often to be traced by the spread among them of the unpleasant traits of the barracks. It may even be asked whether certain unsparing, roughshod methods of the nation's soldiers in Belgium, as well as the many offensive utterances in the press which have made so many Americans rub their eyes and say, "This is not the Germany that I knew years ago," are not due to a subconscious influence of the military spirit. Certainly, unchecked military authority invariably leads to an arrogant and tyrannical spirit which may be more or less inseparable from the military caste with its sharp social distinctions and clearly

divided grades. Our own American army has often had to bear with precisely this sort of charge, and the allegation that it falls far behind the French in its lack of democracy and a due consideration by the officers for the enlisted men has also been made at times.

As for Germany, it may well be asked whether an army which by its very existence creates fear and militaristic rivalry, which forever talks war, can be either a democratic force or, in the long run, a sound educational influence. As an educational system it may have certain merits, but even German professors would hardly deny that it is bought at a heavy cost to the school system of the empire, and, lately, to the university world, for some of the greatest schools of learning find themselves hampered and pinched. If there are underpaid common-school teachers anywhere, they live in Germany, and particularly in Bavaria. The genteel poverty of these men who have to exist upon their pay is one of the great tragedies of life under the Kaiser. But the economic waste of the army is a chief stumbling-block to any betterment in their condition, precisely as the millions it costs prevent

reforms in many other directions. It would seem as if it would be better to have the Krupps earn less than twelve or fourteen per cent per annum and the school-teachers a little more. It would be better to be less efficient as a nation to the extent that that efficiency is created by the army, and for the masses to be happier, with a consequent decrease of a million or so in the Social-Democratic voters. As long as they can roll up four millions of votes and still protest against militarism, even though swept off their feet in war-time, all cannot be well with a culture founded on military force. That their voices and many others will again be uplifted to protest against war and armies when peace returns, is the one thing that is certain about this war.

In no such military and bureaucratic atmosphere as exists in Germany does democracy thrive! Instead, we have the tradition that as the German Empire is the army's creation so the nation's future is dependent wholly upon it. Imitating the ninety-three savants, three thousand German teachers in universities and schools of technology have put their names to the

statement that there is no other spirit in the army save that of the nation; that the spirit of German knowledge and militarism are the same; that the German army and the German universities are identical in their aspirations, since both are devoted to science. They, too, apparently cannot understand that a culture which exists only by reason of the arms behind it is no more a normal, healthy growth than is an industry artificially created by a protective tariff, and kept alive solely by receiving part or all of its profits by the favor of a treasury. They belie their own culture, because it is a free growth while service in the army is compulsory, and compulsory service of the German type may be universal but it is not democratic. Again, this sudden assertion that Germany is wholly dependent upon her army for safety is the historic argument of decadent peoples relying entirely upon mercenaries. Is the German democracy of intellect so without any sources of strength within itself that it cannot flourish save by grace of the militarists? We believe that when the present *Rausch* (intoxication) of the German people is at an end their intellectual

leaders will be the first to deny this interdependence of their realm with another so materialistic, so mediæval, so autocratic, with such barbarous aims as conquest by blood and iron and man-killing by the hundred thousand.

## IV

### THE PROPAGANDA IN AMERICA

FOR all Americans who have sat at the feet of Germany's great teachers and profited by their wisdom, there is no more sorrowful side to the war than the injury she has done to herself as a seat of learning. It seems almost incredible that it is precisely the German teachers who are producing a most unpleasant impression on this side of the water in their efforts to win American public opinion for their cause, but such is the case. Nowhere is there any evidence of a desire on their part to undertake an unbiassed investigation of facts; nowhere proof of a philosophical examination of recent occurrences. Logic is thrown to the winds. We are treated to a flood of rhetoric and of unsupported statements. The assertions of the Allies are flung away as unbelievable, because they are from the Allies; the assumption being that the Germans alone are capable of telling



the truth in this crisis, and that from the rest of the world there comes nothing but falsehood. This failure to deal with the fundamental moral questions from a detached, ethical point of view may be the inevitable result of the wave of patriotism that has swept over Germany, but it is none the less amazing. The world had a right to expect better things, even if it could not hope for calmness in such a national crisis. Was it not from the German universities that we of the United States learned everything we know as to the laboratory method of inquiry in scientific, economic, and historical fields? Does not that presuppose a cold assembling of all the facts prior to the forming of a judgment? And has not every German professor heretofore been dedicated to the pursuit of truth uninfluenced by emotion, without regard to the injury which thereby may inure to any preconceived theory, and without consideration of the cherished opinions of the unthinking mass?

Some of the professors who have rushed into print to defend Germany's cause have done her quite as much harm as the enemy. Take, for instance, the appeal "To the Civilized World,"

published by ninety-three German savants. Some of the most distinguished names in Germany are signed to it — Eucken, Haeckel, Fulda, Humperdinck, Sudermann, Hauptmann, Lamprecht, Kaulbach, Dörpfeld — every one notable in his field. Yet the appeal itself is discreditable to their intelligence, and certain to react against their cause, and this quite aside from the fact that the English in which it is couched is grotesque. Their statement is marked by a total absence of logic. Thus they state that “it is not true that we trespassed in neutral Belgium. It has been proved that France and England had resolved on such a trespass, and it has likewise been proved that Belgium had agreed to their doing so. It would have been suicide on our part not to have been beforehand.”

Here, in the first sentence they deny what they admit in the last. As for their assertions in regard to France and England, no proof whatever is offered, or has been offered, from any source. The worst that has been proved is the fact that England and France had planned how they would act if Germany did precisely

what she has done. To say that it was a violation of neutrality for England and France to plot in advance how, if necessary, they would perform the duties put upon them by the treaty establishing Belgian neutrality is to offend the intelligence. More than that, it appears from a letter of Baron Griendl, for years Belgian ambassador at Berlin, to the Belgian foreign minister that in 1911 Belgium was planning how to resist England if she should be the first to violate Belgian territory. But granting, for the sake of argument, that the professors' contention is true, what does it boil down to? That Germany violated a law because some one else was going to. If anybody was going to murder Belgian neutrality, she was going to be first at the job. What a shocking position for moralists, for teachers of ethics and religion, to assume! They had much better fall back openly upon the highwayman's argument used by the German chancellor that he preferred the law of necessity to that laid down in a "mere scrap of paper."

This attempt to justify a wrong by facts discovered *after* the wrong was committed, is only

a little less amazing than some of the excuses given for it immediately after the attack upon Liège. Then it was first alleged that fifty automobile loads of French officers crossed into Belgium before any German troops entered; next that German cargo-ships had been held up by the Belgians; next it was declared that French aeroplanes had violated Belgian sovereignty; and then it was asserted in round terms that among the prisoners taken in the forts at Liège and Namur were officers and men of various French regiments, who had evidently been there prior to the declaration of war. The number and position of these men vary with every telling; but while we have had photographs of British dum-dum bullets, and of the letter of a British colonel confessing his use of these forbidden missiles, we have had no photographs of these particular French soldiers. No list of the officers thus found in guilty relationship to the Belgian forts has been forthcoming; in brief, no official proof has been vouchsafed. It has not even been included among the wrongdoings of the Allies which have been officially called to the attention of the President of the

United States by Ambassador von Bernstorff and his imperial master. Yet the ninety-three German savants do not hesitate to assert, upon their honor, that there was no breach of neutrality whatever. The world may rub its eyes if it pleases, but there was no neutrality to breach; if the world did not know this before the present time, then the world was far behind the all-knowing German General Staff. That the ninety-three professors thereby deliberately contradict the German chancellor's statement that there was a violation of the law of nations is merely so much the worse for the chancellor, who doubtless spoke in hot haste without previous professorial consultation.

Next, the ninety-three professors insist that the Allies are attacking not German militarism but German civilization, which exists only by reason of the bayonets with which it bristles. What are we to think of all the German teachings of philosophy and ethics and religion if this be true? What kind of civilization is that which rests only upon force, and how valuable is it going to be in the long run? "Have faith in us," the appeal concludes — faith that they

will recover their senses. Faith, yes; but how can one have faith in their judgments hereafter? It would be easy to cite many similarly astonishing utterances from professors, in which men of international reputation accept as facts matters for which no proof whatever is offered or can be offered. Were they to carry on their teaching or their scientific researches in any such manner they would be promptly expelled from their chairs.\* But it is not only the German professors at home who are hurting their cause in the eyes of Americans. There is on this side of the Atlantic Professor Münsterberg, a useful friend to the Allies, if unconsciously so, and there is his Harvard confrère, Professor Kuno Francke. Only a few years ago the latter was writing books showing a complete hostility to Kaiser, bureaucracy, and militarism. Now Germany in his eyes is almost beyond criticism.

Professor Eugen Kühnemann, an exchange professor from Breslau, asserted in an address in Boston, in September, that Germany ought

\* Proof of this is to be found in Prof. Karl Lamprecht's recent address in Berlin, in which he said that with the beginning of the war "the whole world was informed that the Germans are very fine fellows; in this correspondence-competition the professors took the palm. The result was dreadful; not only was there nothing gained, but much harm was done."



not to have violated Belgian territory, but had to do it. This called forth laughter from his audience, and a pointed remark from the chairman as to the professor's irrationality. To this the agile professor genially replied that "Americans did not seem to understand that life was always irrational"! That Americans could only hope to understand Germany if we were situated in America as Germany is in Europe, was another of his contentions. Germany, declared Professor Kühnemann, is "very much satisfied with the state civilization has reached within her country"; and he added: "German militarism is the concentrated power of self-defense against a world of enemies." If it is true that Germany as a whole was menaced by enemies, it was certainly not true of her learned men. Never was there a group of savants who had won so many men's affections and gratitude in every country in the world as had German university teachers prior to the 1st of August, 1914. If there were only enemies confronting their country, it would seem as if a scientific inquiry into what classes of Germans, or what national policies, were rousing such dangerous antipathies, might long ago have been in order.



Fortunately, there are some signs that the excesses of this furor of the intellectuals have begun to cause a reaction at home. Thus the Berlin *Tageblatt* speaks of it as a "war neurosis" (*Krieg's Neurose*), and affirms that it is everywhere "assuming serious proportions." "The injury," it adds, "that it does in the camps of our foes does not concern us, but we should gladly see its effects in our own house diminished." It also remarks that, while the victims of this disease in hostile lands — and it cites the cases of many sorely afflicted in Switzerland, Italy, Portugal, Russia, England, and France — are careful not to hurt the feelings of neutral states, the German sufferers from the epidemic seem to go out of their way to deliver their blows "on the stomachs of neutrals," with the result that they are increasing the enormous difficulties with which Germany is confronted. Some of the German so-called intellectual leaders have, it declares, "less political insight than the youngest attaché of a legation. . . . They forget too easily that the welfare of our soldiers, and the power to see the war through, depend upon a hundred preliminary conditions of material worth, and that in this bitterly earnest

battle no means of aid can be spared and no friendship is to be treated as negligible." Then it admonishes the nation to seek better political knowledge, and it answers those of its fellow countrymen who cannot go to the front and ask what they can do to bridge over the agony of this terrible time with the single word: "Learn." It is praiseworthy advice.

But with the German *Gelehrtenwelt* thus swept from its moorings, it was, of course, impossible to expect anything else from the press, or from those volunteer societies "for spreading abroad the truth about Germany," and the official bodies which are mailing to every ascertainable address printed matter exposing English misrepresentations and presenting their holy cause as they see it. The systematic way in which this propaganda has been carried on is characteristically German, but in its execution it has lacked accuracy, good judgment, and correct form. Special editions of newspapers in German and English containing official despatches and summaries of the news of the war up to the time of publication have been of great value. This cannot be said of such publications as "The Truth about Germany," a pamphlet

which has burdened the mail in repeated editions, and has even been placed on sale upon our news-stands, besides having been reprinted in full by one of our New York dailies.

It contains much that is true about Germany and much that is false, or that conveys false impressions about the war and its origin. Again we have outright assertions of happenings and motives, without a shadow of proof to support them. Thus, we learn that Serbia was on the point of accepting Austria's demands, "when there arrived a despatch from St. Petersburg, and Serbia mobilized," the fact being, of course, that Serbia did agree to everything which Austria demanded except two conditions, which it offered to submit to arbitration, but that Austria at once declared the war for which her militarists had so long been thirsting. Again, there appeared the flat falsehood that Great Britain "asked that Germany should allow French and Belgian troops to form on Belgian territory for a march against our [the German] frontier." The familiar, unsupported charge that England encouraged the war likewise appears. It is with such stuff that the German

public has been fed, and returning American travellers regaled; it is such stuff that has overburdened our mails — with complete lack of appreciation of the fact that the American is a reasoning animal who recognizes a logical absurdity when he sees one, and knows the difference between a substantiated fact and an assertion.

And always this deluge of pro-German literature flows on, as if the German side were not getting a hearing in the American press. In the sixth month of the war letters are still coming from prominent Germans, men and women of affairs and of international experience, which are based on the assumption that, as the German cables were cut, America is seeing only through British spectacles. But, as already pointed out, the German cause has had numerous advocates, of whom the ablest is unquestionably Doctor Bernhard Dernburg, the former minister of colonies, whose years of residence in New York as a young man have apparently made him understand the best method of appealing to the American public. But besides these spokesmen, besides the tons of specially

prepared literature which have been poured in upon us, the mails have brought letters and newspapers with amazing regularity and astounding profusion. Every stay-at-home in Germany with a friend in the United States has felt it a patriotic duty to write to that friend. Meanwhile, the circulation of our German newspapers, like the *Staats-Zeitung*, has everywhere gone up by leaps and bounds; they are being sold on the streets as never before; so, also, in New York, has been the *Berliner Tageblatt*. And all are being bought by thousands who favor the Allies, for the express purpose of hearing both sides. What our German friends still cannot seem to realize, and what will bear repetition here, is that American public opinion was not made up by reports of outrages by German troops, or as a result of the stupid and even disgraceful falsifications and suppressions of the British censors — against whom not only the Germans but the newspapers of America have a just grievance; that it was not formed by emotion or by a hereditary affection for England, but by a calm study of the facts. No fair-minded person can contend to-day that the

American attitude is due to ignorance or to deception from any source.

In view of all this, American friends of Germany may well ask themselves whether the time has not come to found, on this side of the water, societies for the spreading of the real truth about Germany — “facts concerning the war” — not, however, for action within the United States, but in Germany. There is abundant material for such a propaganda, and there is nothing in the situation which would prevent its being presented in an entirely helpful and friendly spirit. Thus, it might be suggested that a nation in arms, in the excitement of such a national calamity, is never in the frame of mind to render impartial judgments upon its own acts. If examples of this were needed, it would be simple enough to point to the unreasoning excitement of the bulk of the American people and their yellow-journal inciters to war in the period, in 1898, between the blowing up of the *Maine* and the declaration of hostilities, and to show how our public opinion in regard to the Philippines underwent a remarkable chastening after the delirious days of May, 1898, when the



country was dazzled by the thought that the sun would thenceforth never set on the American flag. Similarly, the exaltation of the French nation in 1870, with its full belief in the justice of its cause, underwent a complete transformation when victory failed to perch upon its banners. It will be hard, of course, to induce Germany to apply any lessons to herself from the experience of others, for, as Professor Kühnemann indicates, she is so self-satisfied, so certain that her *Kultur* surpasses any other, that she may feel it beneath her to think that she might profit by lessons drawn from abroad. Nevertheless, the effort is worth making. Already the German press and soldiers are beginning to admit that they held a totally erroneous view of their English soldier antagonists, the despised English "hirelings"; that they underestimated the strength of the Russians and the ability of their leaders. As the evident miscalculations of the German General Staff and their country's diplomatic blunders begin to dawn upon them, their minds may be opened a little to arguments and facts which make against their contentions.



Even now, however, a genuine service would be rendered if there could be brought to Germany's attention the simple facts of her own censorship, with its refusal to permit criticism of the powers that be. Few Germans seem to know that their own diplomatic despatches were not always printed in full, but appeared as edited by the authorities. So far as has been ascertained, no German publication of the complete English and French documents has been attempted; the public has learned of them almost wholly through partisan comments by their own editors. Thus, the writer has been unable to discover in the German papers to which he has had access any fair discussion or publication of Belgium's official statement of her side of the case, and the documents bearing thereon. Of all the literature of the war, nothing is more impressive and convincing than this. But the *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung*, for one, made haste to abridge and bury it in an inconspicuous place. True, it might be waved aside upon the familiar assumption that all else is lies save what is German or Austrian; yet we cannot but believe that, if there is anything left whatever of the

old German devotion to scientific truth, its perusal must at least recall to the reader's mind that there are two sides to every case.

It would certainly do no German any harm to-day if he should learn that on the 29th of April, 1913, Herr von Jagow, Secretary of State, declared at the meeting of the Budget Committee of the Reichstag: "Belgium's neutrality is provided for by international convention, and Germany is determined to respect those conventions." He might also read that on August 2, 1914, the German minister at Brussels, Herr von Below-Selaske, stated to the Belgian minister for foreign affairs that he had not been instructed to make an official communication, "but that we (the Belgian Government) knew his personal opinion as to the feelings of security which we had the right to entertain toward our eastern neighbors." "I at once replied," said the Belgian minister, "that we knew their intentions, as indicated in numerous previous conversations, did not allow us to doubt their perfect correctness toward Belgium." Yet on the same date, the same German minister at Brussels presented the German ultimatum which

resulted in the violation of Belgian neutrality!

It would also not be amiss for those Germans who ponder over the failure of the neutral nations to sympathize with Germany, to read once more the telegram of the Kaiser to the King of England, of August 1, 1914, in which the Kaiser says: "The troops on my frontier are in the act of being stopped by telegraph and telephone from *crossing into France*." The significance of this to American readers lies in the Kaiser's astounding admission that mobilization against France meant immediate invasion of France *before any declaration of war*. Had this fact been publicly known or really understood in Germany, it ought surely to have prevented the repeated assertions that France began the war by sending her aviators over German territory, by the entrance of armed patrols, a sudden attack in Lorraine, etc. For it is evident from the Kaiser's own words that long-prepared orders to invade French soil sent some of his troops onto it the instant the first order to mobilize appeared. Whether those troops did any damage or not, or reached French territory

or not, before war was declared, is unimportant. The intent to rush right onto French soil before peace was officially ended is here admitted. It is thoroughly in keeping with the conversation of General von Moltke, in May, 1913, reported by the French ambassador to Berlin, that "we [the Germans] must begin war *without waiting*, in order brutally to crush all resistance." This has been denied in Germany, but it is in keeping with the attitude of leading militarists, and was, perhaps, one of the bits of evidence that led Italy to reject outright Germany's claim that Italy must come to her aid because she had been attacked. At any rate, the German propagandists who seek to conquer hostile American opinion must find some way of getting around the Kaiser's despatch. Its revelation of what German mobilization really meant does, however, in some degree explain why it was that the Kaiser and his military associates were so alarmed by the mere fact of Russian mobilization.

The German public could never have learned from "The Truth about Germany" what it probably does not clearly understand to-day, that the Kaiser's government sent ultimata to

Paris and to Petrograd on the very day upon which Russia had offered to "maintain a waiting attitude" if Austria would "stay the march of her troops" into Serbia, and permit the Great Powers to examine what satisfaction Serbia could give to Austro-Hungary "without injury to her rights as a sovereign state and to her independence." Americans certainly have had to learn of this from other than German sources. Would it not be a fitting return for the earnest efforts made to cure us of our ignorance if an American truth society should circulate this widely in Germany?

Again, without wishing to be critical or to injure anybody, such a society might be of value by reminding the German public that, excellent as its press is, it has nevertheless been guilty of that tendency to print falsities which is an inevitable accompaniment of war. The mere existence of a rigid censorship puts a premium upon rumor and scandalous accusations against the enemy, of which both sides have been victims in this war. Did not an official German despatch report the British army surrounded? Has not the increase and

decrease in the number of Russian prisoners in Germany presented a mathematical puzzle? As for the prophecies and reports in regard to events in South Africa, Ireland, India, Egypt, and the Caucasus, to say nothing of Turkey, and the Holy War, a compilation of these would make sorry reading to-day even if it be admitted — as it must be in all fairness — that the news of the German press and German official despatches have proved, as a whole, more reliable than those of Russia, or France, or England. But it is emphatically a case of the pot calling the kettle black; a vast amount of misinformation has everywhere seen the light — which makes our proposed American propaganda in Germany all the more inviting.

One of the first tasks would have to be the refuting of the long article published in the *Vossische Zeitung* by Doctor Ludwig Stein, entitled "The Change of Opinion in America." In this extraordinary screed he maintains that there has been a complete reversal of our judgment upon the war, thanks to the pro-German propaganda of Doctor Dernburg and others, and to Count von Bernstorff's capture of the



worst of our American journalists — with whom not even a sorely tried ambassador ought, be it said in passing, to associate. Our American society would have to seek to make it clear that this sort of misinformation does infinite harm when reprinted in America because it produces the impression that German publicists are quite untrustworthy. Similarly, our American society would have to explain early in its propaganda that efforts to make Americans understand that Bernhardt's book was known only to a handful of readers, that it was almost wholly unknown in university circles, and is to-day not to be found in many important German libraries, are gravely handicapped by such a speech as that recently made by the commanding general in Hamburg, Major-General von Roehl. Speaking under the statue of Kaiser Wilhelm I, and, he said, exactly in the spirit of the great Kaiser's grandson, Wilhelm II, he declared: "We shall not again sheathe our sharp and just sword until the last of our enemies recognizes that only one people has the right to play a leading part in the political world, and that people is the German people."



When Americans read this they not unnaturally feel that while this may be largely soldier braggadocio, the ineffable nonsense which is an inevitable accompaniment of militarism gone mad, it nevertheless bears out those who assert that, if Bernhardtism is but little known in German academic circles, it has permeated the German army and insidiously affected the leaders of political thought to a greater extent than anybody had realized until the explosion came.

If General von Roehl is to be dismissed merely as a military blockhead, like some of our American talking generals, Professor Ernst Haeckel cannot be thus waved away. Our American society for informing Germany could have no more pressing duty than to make German editors understand that Professor Haeckel injures not merely his own high and international repute, but that of all Germany as well, when he calmly sets down this programme as his view of what steps Germany should take to "reorganize Europe on Teutonic lines" when victory is hers:

"1. The crushing of the English tyranny.

"2. The invasion of Great Britain and the occupation of London.

“3. The division of Belgium. The largest portion, from Ostend to Antwerp in the west, to be a confederated German state; the northern part to be given to Holland; the southeastern part to be given to Luxemburg, which thus enlarged becomes also a confederated German state.

“4. A large number of the British colonies and the Congo Free State to go to Germany.

“5. France to surrender to Germany some of her northeastern frontier provinces.

“6. Russia to be rendered impotent by the reconstitution, under Austrian auspices, of the kingdom of Poland.

“7. The German provinces of the Baltic to be returned to the German Empire.

“8. Finland, united with Sweden, to become an independent kingdom.”

Our proposed society could not be too earnest in impressing upon its German listeners that when such a programme, with its cold-blooded division of Belgium, is published over here it strikes fire from every honest American heart, however inconsistently — or consistently — the head above that heart may view our holding

the Philippines despite the protests of the Filipino people.

Next, our society for spreading the truth abroad could point out to German leaders of thought that the very furor of their foreign propaganda bespeaks genuine provincialism; that it is as dangerous to defend too much as to protest too much. The very certainty of their own superiority which they voice also suggests the desirability of a nearer view and a keener understanding of other people's *Kultur*. To Americans it inevitably recalls the boasting of the Confederates in 1861, and their loud and truculent assertions that the culture of their aristocracy of wealth and land founded upon slave labor was superior to any the world had ever seen. German glorification of their own greatness if anything surpasses that 1861 outburst of self-praise. One usually sound thinker insists: "We are morally and intellectually superior beyond all comparison as to our organizations and institutions. . . . We Germans have no friends anywhere, because we are efficient and morally superior to all." Then we have the *Kreuz Zeitung*, the organ of the mili-

tary, saying that "The world can be revitalized, society ennobled and refined, only through the German spirit. The world must for its own salvation be Germanized."

Just as the Germans are coming to change their opinion about their British antagonists, so did the Confederates speedily forget their early boasts that one Rebel could account for six Yankees. As the Confederates, equally certain of the justice of their cause, and equally united, came to face the world in 1865 with a new point of view, and without their early belief in their own superiority because of King Cotton, so must the German point of view undergo a radical sea change before this great struggle ends. It would be quite as proper for our society for spreading the truth to prepare the way for this in Germany by judicious historical parallels, as it is for Germans to endeavor to convince Americans that it is right for a great nation to trample under foot another people because in her judgment her welfare demands that the weaker shall pay the price.

Thus one might point out indefinitely the tempting opportunity which would loom up

before our proposed organization. For years to come — if the war should last long — it would have subjects galore. The least of its tasks would be to point out to our Teuton brethren that it aids their case not at all to convict Great Britain of hypocrisy, as Treitschke endeavors to do, or any one else of inconsistency. No one who really believes in liberty will pardon England for her treatment of the Boers, or her shameless connivance at the violating of Persia. But guilty humanity moves forward to higher ideals by fits and starts; to the neutral world the devotion of the British people to the idealistic defense of Belgium, which has been assumed by her ministers as the real cause of the war, seems something to be acclaimed. The peace treaty may, of course, show that this asserted cause cloaks for England's rulers merely a sordid desire to crush down their most dangerous trade rival, as the Germans contend. But meanwhile the outsider must take it at its face value when he sees millions of British citizens ready to give up their lives unselfishly in behalf of this principle of the sacredness of the existence of small nations, and must assume that here-

after the weaker countries will at least be safe from British lust of land. Even a sudden British conversion is better than no conversion at all; however the Germans may rail, the neutral world is not disposed to cavil at the spectacle of a great nation, whatever its past, ready to bleed near to death, if need be, that a smaller may live.

Then, some one in Germany ought to direct German attention to the case of France. She has found it necessary to initiate no propaganda abroad in behalf of her soldiery, her motives, or her policy. Not for an hour has her President had to worry as to what the neutral world would think of her. It regrets, of course, that so great a nation was compelled to war merely because of an accursed treaty with as autocratic a power as Russia — with which the real soul of France can have no genuine spiritual communion. But the onlookers abroad know that France has borne herself with rare dignity and restraint; that her moral position is clearer and more shining than that of any other of the combatants; that she has revealed a fortitude in defeat and a resoluteness to succeed in the end

which, together with unexpected qualities of self-control, command the admiration of all who behold with unprejudiced eyes. The nation of Lafayette, of De Grasse, of Rochambeau, has lived up to its very best.

An American society which attempted to say this might just now have a rather sorry time in Germany. It could at least certify that Maximilian Harden comes close to the truth when, in giving up the effort to win over Americans to his country's cause, he admits that we are well informed as to the German arguments, but cannot be convinced because we cannot think like Germans. It would note with regret that the *Deutsche Tageszeitung* thus wrongly counsels its countrymen: "We, however, do not need to regard the public opinion of the world. In the last instance, the German people, united with the Emperor, are alone competent to decide the correctness of Germany's cause," for it would be its duty to point out that no country is strong enough to-day to do without the favorable opinion of all mankind. As for Herr Harden, perhaps he, too, may yet see that if Americans cannot think like Germans just now, it is be-



cause their love of fair play, their historic sympathy for those who battle for liberty, yes, their institutions, forbid.

## V

### THE KAISER AND THE WAR

**F**EW masters of nations have been as heartily abused or as highly praised as the Kaiser. In this respect he invites comparison with the first Napoleon; in the case of both emperors the extremes of praise and blame have been unjust. Americans, on the whole, have been rather disposed to patronize the Kaiser. Thus, one of our captains of industry assured the head of the Hohenzollern that he would go well in tandem with Theodore Roosevelt. When the Kaiser quickly asked, "Which would be the wheel-horse?" the magnate was trapped and at a loss to answer. An entertaining magazine writer condescendingly assured us that the Kaiser "is of the stuff that would have made a first-rate American," and "the real Kaiser" has been done for us more than once, usually with a liberal percentage of error, not unmixed with considerable respect

for his achievements. The average American is apt to consider that a king is necessarily a mere lay figure; hence the surprise one notes when one of our countrymen has come into contact with the Kaiser and found him to be not merely a wearer of innumerable uniforms, and an egotistical defender of the divine rights of sovereigns, but a many-sided man of ability as remarkable as the contradictions in his character, his words, and his conduct.

Extraordinary has been the development of his personality by reason of his responsibilities and his powers. This is not always the case with commoners or with royalty, as the present Czar of Russia proves quite well enough. When the Kaiser ascended the throne, after the tragically brief reign and still more tragic death of his father, few outside of the Prince's immediate *entourage* suspected the latent possibilities of his mind, or the inherent force of his character. Until his father's illness the possibility of his succession had seemed so remote that few thought it worth while to pay much attention to the Prince of Prussia, just become Crown Prince. Those men in public life who had

studied him feared him, because of some imperialistic speeches which are recalled now to show that his callow, eldest son is rightfully the heir of his own boyish point of view. There was as much dread lest he plunge Germany into war when he ascended the throne as there was similar fear in certain circles in America when the assassin's bullet made Mr. Roosevelt President. In both instances the fear was not justified. Mr. Roosevelt kept the peace, and so did the Kaiser for twenty-six years of his reign.

No one who was not in Germany at the time can fully appreciate the shock to the entire country when Bismarck was dismissed like a lackey, as Bismarck himself put it. That the Kaiser was able to live this down and so win the affections of his people that this is not laid up against him any longer, must be regarded as perhaps his greatest personal achievement; for at the time it seemed like laying ruthless hands upon what was most sacred in the life of the young nation, or turning it adrift on uncharted seas for which there was no pilot, since the public had somehow come to feel that this dismissed pilot was going to live on forever. Yet

this was not the only time the Kaiser offended. He seemed unstable and constitutionally restless; striving after the new and the untried, seeking to govern entirely in his own way, and bent continually on rattling his sabre. It is a long distance from that to the present day, when he is pictured as a conservative, as the greatest friend of peace among modern monarchs. And yet the transformation has gone on under our very eyes these last twenty years.

If the Kaiser indeed proved to be a friend of peace until put to the supreme test, he has never outgrown a duality of character as marked as that of his nation. This duality, Prince von Bülow asserts, explains "many a curious phenomenon in the present, as in the past," both in the life of the country and of its individual citizens. Thus the Kaiser may follow up a reactionary, autocratic outburst with a speech both enlightened and constructive. He is at one moment a War Lord in utterance, garbed like Lohengrin, and in the next a civilian deeply concerned with the industrial development of his state. He sets his face against any democracy in the army, and — until now — against

the reception of Jews as officers in any but staff positions, and at the same time selects the Jew Bernhard Dernburg to be the first imperial minister of his race, and makes almost an intimate of Herr Ballin, the brilliant head of the Hamburg-American Line. He is broad enough to permit officers to drink his health in water, and to become total abstainers if they choose, but too narrow to stamp out duelling among them. He is mediæval one moment, and abreast of the times the next. One month may see him guilty of a dangerous political indiscretion and the next find him showing tact and skill in a political situation affecting the nation alone.

Nor are the contradictions of his acts limited to domestic affairs. He was the man who ordered his Pekin-bound troops to wage ferocious war upon the Chinese; who was quite ready to seize Kiau-Chau, and to legitimize the transaction by a long-term "lease," which the landlord did not draw and did not want, and had no option but to sign. He was quite willing to put his blood-and-iron policy into force in German Southwest Africa. He was as ready to have his generals drive thirty thousand Herreros out

in the desert, there to die of thirst and starvation, as he was to crush Belgium when she lay in his path, if thereby German civilization and *Kultur* could be maintained in that far-off, hopeless and hapless African colony. Yet this master of contrasts could send his telegram to President Krüger voicing the very general condemnation of British aggression in South Africa. Efficient in administration at home in most ways, he and his advisers have been singularly inefficient abroad; not, as is now alleged on their behalf, because their diplomats were so honest and guileless as constantly to be outtrumped, and in 1914 to be wholly overreached, but because of disregard of other people's feelings, because of such dangerous rudeness as marked the conduct of Admiral von Diederichs at Manila in 1898, because too much Prussian arrogance was often allowed to slip into the tone of diplomatic correspondence, and for still other reasons dwelt on elsewhere. So there are Germans in plenty to agree with the *Berliner Tageblatt* that this is the time for them to say nothing about the Kaiser's diplomats and diplomacy. Only the visit of Prince Henry to the



United States stands out as particularly creditable to the Kaiser's sense of the fitness of things abroad, which so often serves him well in home affairs.

Nevertheless, during the years of his rule the Kaiser has steadily grown more and more popular as he has become more conservative in his personality. This is partly because of his dramatic skill,\* and partly because of his ability to play on almost every one of the many strings that lead to the hearts of his people. The army is devoted to him as its War Lord, even though its superior officers are not all convinced that he is a great strategist. The church people reverence him because of his blameless private life, the simplicity and purity of his family circle, and his religious faith and constant references to the Almighty in his public utterances. He won the hearts of all fathers and mothers by his exquisite speech at the wedding of his daughter two years ago — a masterpiece of felicitous expression, pervaded by a note of deep affection,

\* Baron Fritz von Holstein, for sixteen years the real power behind the throne in the German foreign office, is said to have once remarked caustically that his Majesty "takes a dramatic result for a political success."

and imbued with real appreciation of the true values of life. The commercial world looks up to him, not because he has been solely responsible for the nation's wonderful economic development, as some would have it, for that would have come to pass if he had ruled only one year, but because he has identified himself with all its interests, and has sought to further the marvellous wave of development which was coming in on a rising tide when he assumed the reins. For the first time, its leaders have been sought by a Kaiser. Capitalists, too, are pleased with the policy of the state in regard to the great combinations approximating to our trusts; they have no such criticisms of their government as have had some of ours during the necessary period of reorganization and control by legislative enactment through which we in America have just passed.

The literary, artistic, and musical worlds do not take the Kaiser's own creations seriously, but they see in him a sympathetic friend, a wise royal patron, even though he may have the poorest taste when it comes to sculptures of his ancestors. The *Junker*, the great landowners,

and the aristocrats find him wholly satisfactory because of his stubborn refusal to countenance any radical or liberal tendencies, his opposition to the Social-Democrats, and his upholding of unjust Prussian suffrage laws — defended as a necessary safeguard to prevent the Social-Democrats from capturing Prussia. The aristocrats who come to Berlin for their brief season of six weeks rejoice in the Emperor's rigid upholding of the historic ceremonial of the court, and his deference to caste, even though he admits commercial men to the intimacy of his yacht.

Imperialistic professors and statesmen find themselves in fullest accord with his views as to the empire's expansion and his creation of a fleet, if only to "protect our oversea trade," as the phrase has run. Officialdom, which is the greatest caste in Germany next to the army, is wholly imbued with the idea that the Kaiser is the ideal ruler. So far from hurting him, his deliberately spectacular methods have helped not a little, precisely as his interest in sports and sailing has captured the younger generation, and helped to give athletics as rapid and

wide a growth in twenty-five years as that of any of the great industries, whose expansion has partaken of the phenomenal. President Roosevelt showed how the masses like a ruler who "does things every minute." The Germans are tremendously taken by a ruler who cruises to the north in the summer and has a villa at Corfu during the winter; who sails his own racing yacht, commands the fleet he has created, and leads impossible cavalry charges in peace manœuvres — all the while dabbling in the arts and sciences. They have long since forgotten that witticism which early in Wilhelm the Second's reign described his grandfather, his father, and himself as the "greise Kaiser," the "weise Kaiser," and the "reise Kaiser" (the aged Kaiser, the wise Kaiser, and the travelling Kaiser).

Prince von Bülow complains because the Germans, whenever they have found an intellectual formula or a system for anything, insist "with obstinate perseverance on fitting realities into the system." Truly, the Kaiser has made his type of ruler a reality to his people, and they have so readily fitted him into their system that

they applauded him even when he declared to some recruits that by the oath they were taking "you are pledged to give your lives to me." In this they see nothing inconsistent with the progress and aims of what is in many matters of government the most advanced of states. Nor do they resent his incessant use of the personal pronoun in describing things which are the nation's, such as its army and its navy. Surely, there could be no greater contrast than that between the first and the second Emperor William, yet the difference in their conceptions of what the headship of the nation means is, perhaps, a true measure of the nation's own development during the last quarter of a century. It is this very mixture of mediævalism, military and civil, with progress which has brought the present catastrophe upon Germany.

But the bulk of the Germans only see that in his person the Kaiser reflects their own efficiency and many of their own ideals. Whereas they would have been startled in 1888 at the prospect of a ruler of the type into which their Emperor has developed, they find him now just the right representative for the nation and its world-

power aspirations. They are, moreover, flattered by the interest or admiration he excites abroad, and the attention he attracts everywhere. When they hear that as a side issue to the business of managing the empire he is a very successful business man in private enterprises, and learn that he has extraordinary, if undeveloped, mechanical talent, they take that much additional pride in him. They know him, moreover, to be a man of unusual charm, when he unbends, and of great personal power, with keen wits, a real sense of humor, and incessant mental activity. They rejoice in his executive ability, and his rare capacity for consecutive labor; no loafer or idler is he, but a man who despatches easily and promptly masses of work. When he is seen in public he makes a most pleasing impression upon his own subjects and upon the foreigners he meets (as is clearly evidenced by the way most of our exchange professors have succumbed to his charms), for he is by no means overbearing, and he readily interests himself in the doings of the varied types of men who come into contact with him, and adopts the manner and speech the occasion re-

quires. Indeed, the bombastic speeches which he addresses to his soldiers and sailors are just what such an audience wishes to hear. In brief, the whole country likes to be bossed by so interesting and brilliant a personality, just as Americans for similar reasons tolerated doings and sayings in Mr. Roosevelt while in office that would have ruined any President who was less entertaining, less energetic, less vital.

Outside of the Socialists and the Radicals, few seem to be able to resist the Kaiser's vigor and charm, or to stop to analyze and inquire whither his political philosophy and his autocratic theory of governing are leading the country. No one else, of course, paints him as such an unspeakable wretch as have the British newspapers, which are repeating, after a century, their falsifications about the first Napoleon; or believes such abominable libels about the Kaiser's sons as that they have robbed, after the manner of common thieves, the castles in which they have sojourned in France. But there were Germans in plenty prior to the outbreak of this war who did dissent from the Kaiser's policies, like the hundreds of thousands



of Germans who vote the Social-Democratic ticket because there is no other effective medium of protest. They vote thereby against the *Junker*, against militarism, against the protective tariff, and the obstacles which, put in the way of the free importation of food, increase the cost of living for the struggling masses and enrich the prosperous Agrarians; but they do not thereby necessarily favor the theories of Marx. They seek for better conditions of life; to them rightly their country is not the ideal nation so many have painted it, and they do not like the type of autocrat the Kaiser represents. They do not forget or overlook the numerous trials for *lèse-majesté*; they believe in the right of a nation to choose its own rulers, and they deplore the absence of a responsible ministry. To such as these the Kaiser, with all his attractiveness, makes little appeal; they even regard him only as the chief ally of those who are entrenched in privilege and in caste; who would run the government to suit their own selfish interests, who are happy in the consciousness that them the Kaiser will not offend.

Indeed, as an ardent reformer the Kaiser

shines not at all. The remarkable social and pension legislation which has been enacted since Bismarck planned it in order to offset the spread of socialism, has come to pass, not in spite of the Kaiser, but without his taking any particular interest in it. Never has he expressed any genuine sympathy for the common people; they were created for him to govern in his wisdom, and this he is ready to do if they will be good and not vote for Social-Democrats. Mr. Price Collier wrote of the Kaiser's "complacent neglect of how the work of the world is done by patient labor; of how the works of art are only born of travail and tears." He has had no grand vizier to take him on night strolls and show him how the masses of his people live, and how many of them often starve. The "acid smell of the homes of the poor" has never offended his nostrils. They are but pawns to man his ships and fill his regiments, while he dwells on high to play with masterly skill the rôle of the ruler who owes obedience to no one, neither to Reichstag nor to people. It is picturesque, it is grand, it is done with artistic attention to details, it gives to the nation a wonderfully paint-

able head; but it leads nowhere, for it is directly contrary to that democratic current of the ages which flows on over kings of blood and kings of privilege alike, and is certain to relegate them all eventually to the limbo of the outworn.

When the war broke out, to many, in the first flush of a passionate sense of the injustice done to Germany herself by permitting her to take to wholesale murdering, it seemed as if this terrible crime against humanity must end one dynasty after another. Yet for the moment, as has been pointed out elsewhere, the Kaiser stands higher in the esteem and affection of his subjects than ever. They are united and determined; they have buried all grievances and dislikes and healed all differences for the hour. They turn to the Kaiser in the firm belief that his commanding abilities will find the way out; they are as content to die for him personally as for the state he dominates. Did not the crews of the lost German ships go down to death cheering for his Majesty with the same enthusiasm as for the empire? Are not the two million volunteers quite ready to take him at his word that their lives belong to him to throw

away as he sees fit? Doubtless were he not so deeply concerned with the outcome of it all, did not heavier cares weigh upon him to-day than upon any other human being, he might rejoice that, for the moment, in authority and in the good will of the people he stands at the highest possible pinnacle. Socialists, Radicals, Liberals, Clericals, all who have cavilled in the past are for the nonce silenced; the Reichstag exists, as he would have it, merely to record his decrees. For the hour he is supreme. Whether it is or is not true that he was forced to the war by an ultimatum from his General Staff, and was then overcome by emotion and a realization of the frightful significance of the step he had taken, when one simple sentence from him would have preserved the peace of Europe, he holds in his hands to-day the immediate fate of his empire. There is no time now for duality of personality for him, or for his subjects; theirs can only be the rôle of fighting men.

But when it is all over, what then? If it is to be victory, or a deadlock because of mutual exhaustion and inability of one side to conquer the other, the Kaiser's star will stand high in

the constellations. Not that there will be no murmurs of discontent; the democratic tendencies of the age will still have to be reckoned with, for they cannot be stilled for long. There are numerous Germans who insist to-day that their country can never again take a less exalted attitude toward its problems than that which it has assumed toward the crisis that now confronts it. What they call the ennobling of the nation by its readiness to sacrifice all, will, they declare, never be wholly lost; it will be impossible, they aver, for Germans ever to think parochially again. The Kaiser, too, was absolutely sincere when, in the spell of that momentous hour, he shook hands with the Social-Democratic leaders and said that party considerations would never again weigh with him. But he and they have spoken in an hour of spiritual intoxication. When they awake it will be to a realization that with the advent of a successful or an unsuccessful peace will come a rebirth of the old schisms and issues; that the Social-Democrats will appear as black as ever to the lords of privilege, and vice versa. If Germany escapes a period of gross corruption,

of rank materialism, of lowered vitality, of genuine decadence, such as followed hard upon the heels of our idealistic war for the preservation of the American Union, she cannot avoid a coarsening of the nation's entire fibre, for that is inevitable when a country goes through such physical horrors and suffering. When the sacredness of human life, upon which foundation every state is founded in time of peace, is so utterly disregarded, so basely violated, there can be no return to the older ideal save at a high price.

Beyond question, if the Kaiser triumphs it means a setback to every liberal democratic movement. War inevitably retards reforms wherever it is fought; the economic waste presses so heavily that a nation's shaken energies are usually absorbed for years in making good the losses. Then we may count upon declarations by autocracy and aristocracy that their militaristic policies triumphed, that the mailed fist on sea and land alone saved the country from completest disaster. Again, there is nothing in the Kaiser's record to lead any one to hope that if he wins he will seek to reward



the nation for its courage, steadfastness, and sacrifices by turning toward liberalism. But if he loses there will be a different story; only the defeat of the empire will afford hope that there will be rapid progress toward democratization, toward a responsible ministry, toward equality at the ballot-box in Prussia, toward elective rulers, toward the overthrow of the false gods of militarism and imperialism. Disaster will mean the real test of the Kaiser's greatness as it meant a supreme test of the spiritual qualities of both the Napoleons, to which neither of them reacted.

For human nature is so constituted that the public will begin to question and to find fault with its ruler if matters should go wrong. Then we should definitely learn if there are really great moral qualities and true spiritual leadership in the Kaiser; whether there is hidden in him any of that unshakable faith in the common people which exalted Lincoln in the hour of darkness. Surely without Lincoln's sympathy for and understanding of the masses he could never have led them through years of defeat and discouragement to final triumph. Can a ruler who is as far removed from the great



majority of his subjects as the Kaiser do as well? Time will perhaps tell. Will he shrink in defeat like the American who has most resembled him? Whether he does or does not, we shall be witnessing in the next few years, because of the war, still another phase of the fascinating mental and spiritual development of this extraordinary man, who in his own person has done more than any other ruler to revive the fading glories of royalty. When one looks at the other kings, him at Petrograd, at London, at Belgrade, at Vienna, and rates their mental calibre, ponders on what they stand for, and sums up the good and the evil of their reigns, one cannot but feel that this Kaiser shines by contrast, for all his faults, for all his imperfect development which the war may do much to round out.

He bulks still larger if we but regard the size of the men with whom he is surrounded. Compare Von Bethmann-Hollweg and Bismarck one cannot; the 1914 Von Moltke appears to resemble the 1870 Von Moltke only in name. The more one considers the court at Berlin, the greater does the Kaiser's stature appear.

If his grandfather's simple, far from brilliant mentality drew men of great power to his side to be the real governors of Germany and the true arbiters of her fate, his grandson's dominant personality has attracted to him, particularly of late, no men of powers to match his own. He remains, when all is said and done, a vigorous, keen, stimulating, vital person, vibrating with power, at this hour confronted with a problem the solution of which is big with his own fate, that of his throne, and of his subjects.

## VI

### IMPERIALISM AND THE GERMAN PARTIES

**N**ATURALLY there are deeper causes than the Kaiser's ability and popularity, or the nation's amazing prosperity, to account for Germany's readiness to live on under a government which is neither truly representative nor democratic. If David Starr Jordan goes to extremes when he says that her political ideals "hark back to the sixteenth century" and that "a great nation which its own people do not control is a nation without a government," it is nonetheless true that the German tendency to-day is away from government by numbers, and that one looks in vain between the Conservatives and Socialists for a really effective radical group with liberal ideals. The failure of the National Liberals to stand as a great reform party has been chiefly responsible for the accession to the Social-Democratic

ranks of those who vote its ticket without being converts to its doctrines. There was a time some years ago when it appeared as if men like Ludwig Bamberger, Eugen Richter, Heinrich Rickert, Georg von Siemens, and Theodor Barth were to be the leaders of a truly Liberal party. They were statesmen who talked a language which liberal Americans, seeking to free their countrymen from the shackles of privilege, could understand as well as the English disciples of the Manchester school. Indeed, their political ideals were largely those of Cobden, Bright, and Gladstone.

It could never have been said of Germany, had they become powerful factors in its parliamentary life, as it is being alleged to-day, that there exists an "irreconcilable antagonism of the two conceptions of life" — the German and the American. Herr Harden would have been far less likely to write of the inability of the two nations to think alike. This radical group was also profoundly influenced by American ideals with which Barth found himself in deepest sympathy because of a knowledge and appreciation of American institutions second only

to that of James Bryce. These radicals stood in varying degrees for friendly international relations and labored for peace; they opposed Agrarian aggressions as they did the severe Bismarckian laws against the Socialists. They were earnest free-traders, opposing all protective tariffs, as they did all duties on foodstuffs. While believing in fair and liberal treatment for the Social-Democrats, they vigorously opposed their views, just as Barth led in denouncing the efforts to conquer the unconquerable Danes and Poles whom fate has placed under the Prussian eagle. There was nothing imperialistic about them and it is difficult to think that if they had lived until the present crisis they would not have been desperately unhappy over Germany's plight to-day and her drift away from the pacific, democratic ideals for which they contended. For example, as Von Bülow admits, Eugen Richter very nearly defeated the army legislation asked by Count von Caprivi, whose demand for seventy batteries and 18,000 men seems modest indeed in the light of subsequent developments. Altogether they were a group so able as to exercise an in-

fluence far out of proportion to their numbers; yet their followers have been ground between the misnamed National Liberals and the Conservatives on the one hand, and the Social-Democrats on the other. In Bismarck's time all his great power was thrown against the Radicals, often to their personal financial loss. Individually he counted them among his most dangerous opponents. As for the National Liberals, they years ago threw away their chance to become a really strong reform party. In many respects they are but a shade less conservative than the Conservatives. Independent radical spirits they attract not at all. In 1912 at the Reichstag elections the Liberals and Radicals cast 3,227,846 votes as against 7,401,825 cast for all the other parties. If they could but pull together and unite on a truly liberal and progressive platform, they could obviously exercise an enormous influence on German political life.

As the years went by, the enlightened radical leaders disappeared one by one, and the development of the paradoxical modern Germany continued. Thanks to militarism on the

one hand, with its constant teaching of complete submission to the authority of the state, and to the mistaken Social-Democratic policies and teachings on the other, the Agrarian, Clerical, and capitalistic forces before whom the government bends the knee have had things their own way. The Socialists have really aided the Kaiser from one point of view, for their theory that the state should do and be all has helped him to strengthen and increase his tremendously centralized and militaristic authority over his people. Dr. Michael Sadler, the vice-chancellor of the University of Leeds, is one of the comparatively few foreign observers to perceive that for Germany this has meant a deadening of independent moral judgments and shrewd political observation by "an excessive use of state authority and by too persistent an appeal to national self-interest." Intense centralization of power has defeated the advocates of a decentralized authority. "Militarism gave Germany discipline. Industrialism, helped by discipline, gave her wealth. The doctrine of the state secured general obedience and a certain form of self-sacrifice. And by this combina-



tion of good and evil modern Germany grew very rich and very strong."

Prince von Bülow has said of his great predecessor, Bismarck, that "his rule can only serve as a precedent for a strong, determined, and even ruthless government." But Bismarck was a cynical intriguer as well as a man of blood and iron. If there was anything he would refrain from doing — falsifying documents, purchasing politicians, and corrupting the press — it would be hard to name it. Being without principle or scruple, he was naturally one of those politicians who think it the height of statesmanship to steal from the other man's theories whenever one's rival seems to be striking a popular chord. With his nature, his firm belief in the necessity of an autocratic state intrusting complete power to the Kaiser he had created, a liberal policy such as that of Richter was out of the question. He turned his attention to the Socialists, to beat them at their own game, and laid the foundations for that monarchical socialism which has often won praise abroad because of its apparent devotion to the general welfare. The state administration of railroads,

telegraphs, telephones, and of many mines and forests, its speculation in lands, its care of the aged, disabled, and unemployed, the former through compulsion of the employers, were nearly all the outgrowth of Bismarck's determination to filch the clothes of his opponents and to use what he considered was available in Socialism to fortify the state against the complete demands of the Socialists. Friendly encouragement of the *Kartels*, the German equivalent for our trusts, was but a natural step for so materialistic a state as Bismarck left.

Yet, as so often happens, these particular compromises have not only not resulted in the desired checking of the Social-Democratic party, but have actually witnessed its growth from 124,700 votes in 1871 to 4,250,329 in 1912. In the five years from 1907 to 1912 it grew at the rate of 200,000 a year. It is as interesting to guess what Bismarck would have said to this as it is impossible to refrain from the thought that the government may find a certain compensation for the existing war in its diversion of public thought from internal to external affairs. Certainly, with the terrible human

losses now going on, and the war-time rallying to the support of the Kaiser, it is perfectly safe to say that there will not be 200,000 Socialist accessions in 1915. Prince von Bülow, who is a much more authoritative and skilful exponent of the modern imperialistic Germany than the Bernhardis and Treitschkes, will surely be of this view, for he has laid down the rule that a vigorous national policy is the very best defense against the Social-Democratic movement — “a policy which brings the best powers of the nation into play; which supports and strengthens the middle classes, already numerous and ever increasing in number, the vast majority of whom steadily uphold the monarchy and the state. . . . The idea of the nation as such must again and again be emphasized by dealing with national problems, so that this idea may continue to move, to unite and to separate parties. . . . The danger must be faced and met with a great and comprehensive national policy. . . .” What could please him better than a foreign conflict if it can but be successfully carried on?

Thus the Social-Democrats, the only great,

vital, radical force in German politics, are likely to suffer doubly from the war: first, through the temporary ending of all agitation and the changed public attitude toward domestic affairs; and secondly, because of their own inconsistent policy toward the war. It is true that when the party in its annual conclaves has voted on the question of a general strike in case of war, the proposal has been rejected. Nevertheless, it was felt that, if the menace of war came, they would exert a tremendous pacific influence at home and abroad. This conflict came too suddenly for that, but it was still believed that Socialists on both sides would refuse to take part in the fighting, or at least record their abhorrence by voting against it. But the deadly poison of compromise had entered the veins of the German brothers of the Socialist faith when they voted to increase and support the army, precisely as the same spirit of compromise with those who believe in a large army and navy has palsied the effectiveness of our American peace societies. Had even a few of the German followers of Marx possessed sufficient courage and conviction to

go to jail for their pacific beliefs, or to face a firing squad, if need be, their cause would have been advanced the world over. Now it is suffering proportionately everywhere; in all countries the Socialists are being tainted with insincerity, with being without the courage of their convictions. In Germany, Liebknecht alone has dared to refuse to vote for a war credit, and for this he may be punished ere these words appear in type; for, as Von Bülow has declared, the Social-Democrats are as thoroughly disciplined as any other body in the Kaiser's empire — to which fact he attributes their formidableness. It is obvious, surely, that the Social-Democrats will have gained nothing and have lost much by the war, which they can hardly criticise successfully after having voted to support it and after having taken part in it. It must be a wide-spread cause of regret that what seemed like one of the most hopeful forces for peace is now bound and delivered.

The trouble was that there was nobody among the German Socialists to speak out like Romain Rolland in France and to point

out to them the error of their present position: that by holding aloof from their country's battles they will merely bring upon themselves the whip of the Russian autocracy and that social organization of England which, in foreign eyes, grinds down her poor. With rare eloquence Rolland wrote:

“You Socialists on both sides claim to be defending liberty against tyranny — French liberty against the Kaiser, German liberty against the Czar. Would you defend one despotism against another? *Unite and make war on both.* There was no reason for war between the Western nations; French, English, and German, we are all brothers and do not hate one another. The war-preaching press is envenomed by a minority, a minority vitally interested in maintaining these hatreds, but our peoples, I know, ask for peace and liberty and that alone. . . . Who has brought these plagues upon them, brought them to the desperate alternative of overwhelming their adversary or dying? None other than their governments, on whom, in my opinion, the guilt rests; the three rapacious eagles, the three empires, the tortuous policy

of the house of Austria, the ravenous greed of Russia, the brutality of Prussia. The worst enemy of each nation is not without but within its frontiers, and none has the courage to fight against it."

Had German Socialism but spoken with as clear a note, how vastly strengthened would be its position to-day!

If this blunder cannot now be undone, it is interesting to note that Dr. Albert Südekum, the Social-Democratic leader and the member of the Reichstag who is perhaps best informed as to conditions in the United States, in a recent lecture in Berlin on "The War and the German Laboring Man," served notice on the prominent government officials in his audience that his party would ask, when peace is restored, a good many rewards for their patriotism as attested by their military services and sacrifices. He called for such a "mobilization" after the war, in matters of law and education, together with a reform of the Constitution, as will give the masses a far larger share in their government and their administration.

Should this come about, it ought to be at the



expense of the Clericals and Conservatives (the upper millstone for the Radicals), whose position will surely be strengthened if the Kaiser wins. It is true that when it comes to questions of national defense there are no Catholics and no Protestants. Religious prejudices as affecting these two churches are not tolerated in the army, however powerful racial dislikes may be. There are no Protestant or Catholic regiments as such. But in the country as a whole the influence of Rome presses severely in more quarters than one, and the Clerical party is a religious party, however it may deny the fact. Bavaria, a Clerical kingdom, lags in some respects well behind the other German states. In brief, the Centre is the party of reaction or of standing still. In the nation its programme is for religious teaching in the schools, for a compulsory religious marriage, for protective tariffs, and for the strongly centralized state. It has for years formed a solid block of approximately one hundred votes in the Reichstag, usually cast on the side of the government, but at times in opposition, in order to obtain party advantage or by reason of a political bargain.

In one such case, in 1906, when the Reichstag refused to vote the emergency estimates for the army then fighting in Southwest Africa, the Centre actually struck hands for the moment with their sworn enemies the Social-Democrats. Von Bülow dissolved the Reichstag on the ground that a refusal to vote the men and supplies the Kaiser asked was an intolerable invasion of his constitutional rights as supreme warlord. The Centre gained three votes in the ensuing election, the Social-Democrats meeting with a veritable, but totally unexpected, disaster.

While Von Bülow was ever ready to accept the historic support of the throne by the Clericals when it was to be had, he now feels that there are "many weighty reasons why a religious party should not wield such extraordinary and decisive influence in politics as was the case for many years in this country. The Centre is and will remain a party held together by religious views, however subtly opinion in Cologne and Berlin may argue about the idea of a religious party." One of these weighty reasons is probably a recognition of the fact that

logically a church like the Roman Catholic must be more concerned with international polity than national. The trend of the church is in the opposite direction from the intense national idea toward which the Germany of to-day has been steered. Imperialistic materialists of the Von Bülow-Treitschke type cannot, moreover, view with satisfaction the control in Rome, a foreign city, of a great German church which numbers one-third of the citizens of the nation. Then there are the historic encounters between the Centre and the federal government in Berlin which show pretty clearly that there is always the possibility of a conflict between them, that is, between the wishes of the papacy at Rome and the controlling powers in Berlin.

Hence the German Imperialists have felt that, however much the Centre might lean toward conservatism and the support of the throne, it would sooner or later be a serious stumbling-block in their way. Von Bülow was the more ready, therefore, in 1907 to turn to Liberals and Radicals for his majority. The latter fell readily into his nationalistic trap and were soon compromising themselves from the stand-

point of consistency and principle by voting for the great armaments, quite forgetting how brilliantly Rickert had opposed them a few years before. In consequence Von Bülow was able to point triumphantly to the spectacle of all the middle-class parties lined up for militarism and for that world-imperialism which, as now appears, was the logical outcome of the nationalistic propaganda. At the beginning of the fateful year 1914 Von Bülow could even write in his own justification: "The national questions of the empire have ceased to be a subject of anxiety in home politics." But, confidently as he and others may hope to find the power of the church of Rome in Germany weakened by the tremendous outburst of national feeling due to the war, it is by no means certain that they will find their hopes realized. The Centre, which could gain seats in the bitter campaign of 1906, when it was taunted with an unpatriotic failure to support a German army under fire — freely portrayed as tantamount to treason — is the party least likely to be affected by the war, however desirable might be a decrease of its power. It appears to be practically un-

shakable in its intrenched position by any upheaval whether due to domestic or foreign causes — at least unless its South German strongholds are affected by some far-reaching wave of liberalism and reform. If the reasons given above for the natural aloofness of the Centre from the nationalistic policy are sound, future chancellors will still have to reckon with its lukewarmness, as did Von Bülow.

As for the Conservatives and the favored minority of privilege-holders they represent, what more natural than for these overlords to turn from imperialistic exploitation and domination at home to imperialistic schemes abroad? They, too, have recognized in their appeal to national pride, ambition, and cupidity, an excellent means of combating the advocates of social revolution. They have asserted that colonies were necessary to protect their overseas trade and to provide for their surplus population. But emigration dropped from 220,902 in 1881 to the insignificant figure of 19,883 in 1908. Those who maintain, therefore, that Germany must have territory to which to overflow can justify themselves only by reference

to a distant future. If the German steamship lines had had to depend upon German emigrants for support, they must long since have failed; even to South America — Brazil and the Argentine — about which our American jingoes have shown such hypocritical concern, lest there be a violation of the Monroe Doctrine, the German emigration is, of late, absolutely nil. There has been too great prosperity at home and too rapid industrial expansion. Then, the German is not a successful colonist; he is as overbearing and unjust in governing the natives that come under his sway as our Southerners are in their treatment of the negro masses upon whose manual labor their prosperity is founded. Ruthless Prussian methods are applied abroad as if they were the only standards of government; as if there were no possibility that forms and methods of administration might have to be changed in different climates with different human beings. As a result there have been bloody rebellions in the largest colonies. It is a kind of poetic justice, therefore, which sends native troops against the Germans. The spirits of the slaughtered and starved Herreros

may perhaps be rejoicing at the sight in about the same measure as the Germans are horrified that their *Kultur* is being assailed by what they are pleased to call "mongrel races."

Still another fact shows the falsity of the German imperialist contention as to the necessity of colonies. Each year several hundred thousand Italian, Russian, Polish, and Hungarian workmen cross into Germany to harvest the crops. They in part, therefore, take the place of the 860,000 Germans who are drawn off from industrial employments because of the compulsory military service. At almost all times it is possible to see in South Germany Italians working on large public enterprises precisely as they are doing the heavy work in the eastern States of America. In other words, the expansion of German industry which is so apparent by contrast the minute one crosses the Alsacian border, when bound from France eastward, has far outrun the natural expansion of the population, and this is true despite the overcrowding and the poverty of the masses in the cities. But, if it were not true, it is still a fact that the Germans are untempted by the oppor-



tunities in their colonies, as Doctor Dernburg, the best colonial minister they have had, well knows. In some of the smaller colonies the total German population is practically the official one. Never was there so clear a case of acquisition for acquisition's sake as this of the German colonies. Until the early eighties Germany lived in complete happiness without thought of one. Then the idea came to Bismarck that Germany must be in the fashion, and so the grabbing of other people's lands began, in slavish imitation of France and England. As one who was in Berlin when the first "German Africans" arrived there, the writer well recalls what elaborate official efforts were made to rouse the public to enthusiasm over this first plunge into an oversea venture, which was part of Bismarck's deliberate propaganda to arouse national pride and solidarity among the German states then unified but a dozen years.

As for the argument that Germany must have colonies as coaling stations for her war-ships and refuges for her merchantmen in the event of hostilities, the war has shown that for her the only safe harbors abroad are neutral ones.

Her navy, which, it was insisted, was necessary to protect her commerce, has failed to do so, and despite the daring and dash of the *Karlsruhe*, the *Emden*, and a few others, the injury inflicted by her commerce-destroyers is a mere trifle when compared with the British loss in exports and imports in the first five months of the struggle due solely to the dislocation of trade by the war. This commerce-protecting argument has done good service in Germany for the imperialists, but if there had been no great merchant fleet to warrant it, another reason for this naval expansion would have been found, precisely as our American imperialists have found other excuses for our unduly large "defensive" navy. The mischief done to Germany by the upbuilding of its fleet will one day, we trust, be set forth by some sound German historian, after the bitterness of the present conflict has passed away. He will show how its upbuilding increased the size of the French, British, and United States fleets; how it gave chauvinists everywhere the opportunity to rouse suspicion and passion against Germany, and how its existence helped to draw Great Britain

into the catastrophe of 1914. He will recall to his readers the fact that Germany's coasts needed no fleet to protect them in 1870.

Judging by the masterly inactivity of the French and Russian fleets thus far, those coasts would have been safe enough under the protection of their guns and mines had France and Russia been Germany's only enemies. Up to the present time there has been nothing in the progress of the naval war to prove that Germany has gained anything of real moment by her fleet. The war will be decided on land, and thus far the Kaiser's navy has weakened its opponents scarcely at all; it has simply fed German pride by proving that Germany's officers and men are no less excellent seamen, and perhaps even more daring, than England's; that they can fight and die with supreme courage and complete readiness to sacrifice all, even when the odds are overwhelming. The development of the German fleet has, indeed, had a tragic effect upon the fortunes of the nation, if only because of the uneasiness and antagonism it has created in Great Britain, Germany's natural ally.

If it be asserted that this is England's fault, that the danger to her swollen navalism was really what aroused her to strike, and that she has no natural right to a monopoly of sea-power, our answer is that it is difficult to see how Germany has benefited in any way by her fleet to offset the anxieties it created, justly or unjustly, not only in England, but in France and the United States. The writer holds no brief whatever for the British navy, but no one can point to any injury done to Germany's sea trade since the foundation of the empire by reason of the preponderance of British war-ships. In the face of it the German merchant fleet has grown year by year with amazing celerity, because of the enterprise and far-sightedness of her merchants, the skill of her ship-builders, the character and ability of her seamen. No subsidies have been needed, and no colonies either, for this wonderful expansion, and no selfish appeals to national cupidity or national pride. Her battle fleet has helped not at all, for her conquest of the sea has in fact been due to the same thrift, scientific management, and industry that account for her success ashore. The war fleet, it

must be repeated, has burdened Germany because of the fears and prejudices it caused; but this is, of course, the very contrary of the teachings of the nationalists and imperialists.

Unfortunately for Germany, as has been pointed out, her diplomacy has often marred her efforts to essay the rôle of a world-power. Her diplomatic corps has been too rigid and too narrow, too exclusively aristocratic, too little representative of the best in the nation, and too prone to adopt the bureaucratic tone. It still appears to be actuated by the old idea that the diplomat is the personal representative and agent of the monarch and of nobody else. Intelligent Germans frankly envy the French foreign service, in which a man of talents may rise to the highest posts without having to seek the favor of an exclusive, autocratic court. They have seen much good in our American diplomatic system, or, better, lack of system. For if it sometimes leads to our being misrepresented abroad by men lacking in experience, knowledge, good manners, and refinement, it at least brings men of varying types to the front — business men, journalists, lawyers, pol-

iticians, and not mere bureaucrats of a peculiarly narrow tradition. True, these professional diplomats are supposed to be broadened by residence in all quarters of the globe; yet, as a writer in the *Deutsche Rundschau* has recently pointed out, the German bureaucracy, although "the most reliable and best in the world, must fail in the foreign service, because the training is rigid, inflexible, and precisely the same as for administrative duties at home." Others may not agree with him that German diplomacy has been "too correct" and too much controlled by a narrow judicial point of view. But his assertion that it is small-calibred and that it smacks too much of the petty bureaucratic, *i. e.*, is too "*assessorenhaft*," is not likely to be gainsaid by those who know. As a result, he says, the German meets everywhere he goes with "a failure to understand him or a dislike tinged with hatred." This writer is frank to say that this state of affairs cannot be explained away by asserting that German success is Germany's only crime; the responsibility, he insists, lies not all with the other nations.

The truth surely is that Germany's inner



social and political development has not kept pace with the expansion of her foreign trade and her international interests, with the result, as we have seen, that those international relations have been bunglingly handled for domestic political purposes or for a world-policy injurious to the nation. This cannot be emphasized too strongly, and when to it be added that the men who are trusted to interpret Germany's national aspirations abroad are not representative of the aspirations of the bulk of the people, or even of her commercial interests, the reasons for dissatisfaction with her foreign service are plain. The press repeatedly sins when it comes to dealing with foreign affairs; at least, it has a rare faculty for supporting the wrong side. Thus, in the Spanish-American War, in upholding Spain it made absolutely no allowance for the altruistic and unselfish motives which actuated the bulk of the American people; it failed to distinguish that, however badly a section of our press, politicians, and public might behave, there was at bottom no ulterior purpose. Recollections of German tactlessness at Manila and elsewhere rankle in this country to



Germany's detriment to-day. In the settlement of the Chinese war she alienated Japan and angered England, with the resultant Anglo-Japanese alliance now so fateful to her. When England made advances, Germany rebuffed her, because at that particular moment she cared more for her friendship with Russia, the net result being that Russia, France, and England became allies. All of which recalls the saying of Friedrich Wilhelm IV that "the army has in every case had to make good the blunders of our diplomacy"; that it may succeed in doing so now must surely be the fervent wish of many thousands of Germans to-day.

Even when, as in Moroccan affairs, Germany was tactically correct, her diplomats have not known how to utilize their situation to the fullest advantage, or how to present their case so as to make the best possible impression on the rest of the world. It is impossible to-day to foresee any better relations for her with the other members of the family of nations until responsible parliamentary government is established with control over foreign affairs and with the powers of the Kaiser curtailed.

The same thing is true of the Russian autocracy to-day. England, for instance, is very happy to have Russia help her, but trust her she does not. It all comes back to the fact that in our present political development an unchecked monarchy is a far greater danger to the peace of the world than is a democracy.

How soon is this going to be realized by the German masses? How soon will they see that the best way to master the seas and supply the needs of the outside world is the pacific way, the way of free and friendly trade without the threat of army and navy? How soon will they realize the harm that this threat has worked in the past; that their altogether admirable conquest of foreign marts has been used as a blind by those who would cure internal ills not by genuine reforms, but by playing one party off against another and confusing all by chauvinistic appeals? Upon the speed with which these questions are answered would seem to depend the progress of internal reform in Germany, for which her well-wishers look so eagerly.

By its very nature war checks reasoning; yet

the hour will come when Germany's political leaders, her men and women of conscience, will sit down with one another to judge the past and to count the costs of the war. They will find their country bereaved and in mourning for an incredible number of needlessly wasted souls, with scarcely a family unseared by some bitter, bitter loss. By the side of this impoverishment, materialistic things pale, but how great will be the money debt to face them, to counteract and offset years and years of arduous, penurious labor, of thrift, of self-denial! The lives of all who survive will be profoundly affected and altered. Cherished ambitions will have come to naught; for thousands of parents who will have sacrificed not one but two and three sons the skies will be clouded forever. No sunlight will again penetrate the darkened chambers of their hearts. Men and women by tens of thousands will have passed overnight from riches and competence to poverty. The misery of the poor will handicap them more than ever, particularly if, in addition to the debt of the war, they must again take up the burden of supporting 860,000 men in unproductive labor

to prepare for another such massacre of innocents — for such it is. All this at the bidding of an uncontrolled imperialism!

Will not the masses, if they but reason about it, be tempted to pray that their enemies may have the power to punish them by sinking their fleet, by levelling their forts, by forbidding them to arm again? Will they not, failing that, take it upon themselves to arrange their affairs and recast their institutions that the like of this most diabolical of catastrophes shall never occur again? Will they not insist upon their reckoning with the “national idea,” recognizing it as an autocratic device to confuse issues and parties? Will there not be raised up now a Gambetta; some real champion of the people, unhampered by the fallacies of Socialism, to lead with a constructive, but radical, programme? For him Germany has long been waiting, perhaps even now in vain. But there is a wonderful need for such a one to point the true way to national greatness; to overcome the fallacies of professors and princes; to show what is the true spiritual way to conquer the world, to call up once more the spirit of the old, beloved

Germany, self-contained, lovable, devoted to liberal thought as to freedom from cant and dogma, a menace to nobody, revered everywhere for her sciences, her knowledge, and the wisdom of her teachings.

Perhaps only one thing is certain: the political Germany of yesterday has gone forever. It is beyond recall, whatever the check or the gain to the things of the spirit, or whither the current of democracy shall flow which now stirs so sluggishly the political deeps of what is the Kaiser's empire, but must some day be his people's.

## VII

### THE UNITED STATES AND THE PEACE TREATY

**A**T this writing many Americans are chafing at President Wilson's policy of neutrality. They would have the United States officially voice its protest against the violation of Belgium. Was it not a signatory with Germany to that convention of the Second Hague Conference which forbade belligerents to move troops across the territory of a neutral power? Shall the United States remain silent while Germany makes of these solemn Hague treaties mere scraps of paper? Ought this country not to hasten the end of the war by letting Germany feel the full weight of our government's indignation at this breach of faith? Some, like ex-President Eliot, urge that we participate in the war in order that bloodshed cease at an early date and that the victory

be so decisive as to make out of the question a Waterloo a few years hence.

Against this President Wilson has wisely set himself like flint. It is of the utmost importance to all the combatants that the greatest of the remaining neutral nations should keep its poise and be free from the bias inevitable if it should take sides by diplomatic action or by active participation in the war. Both sides have appealed to the head of this country to judge the alleged illegal war-acts of their enemies — a striking proof that they have felt the need of an unprejudiced international tribunal before which to plead. Both sides have thus admitted the dominating moral position of the United States. There appears to be general agreement that it will be President Wilson's task to initiate the peace proceedings when there has been butchery enough. Returning travellers report that President Wilson's reputation abroad has grown immeasurably since the war began. British newspapers have dwelt with satisfaction on that passage in his annual message to Congress in which he so eloquently says that "We are the champions of peace and



of concord. And we should be very jealous of this distinction which we have sought to earn. Just now we should be particularly jealous of it because it is our dearest present hope that this character and reputation may, presently, in God's providence, bring us an opportunity such as has seldom been vouchsafed any nation, the opportunity to counsel and obtain peace in the world and reconciliation and healing settlement of many a matter that has cooled and interrupted the friendship of nations." If there has been some serious irritation by reason of Mr. Wilson's firm and just protest against the British policy in regard to neutral vessels, there is every prospect that the friendly tone of the American communication and of the British answer will permit a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the entire matter without any grave disturbance of the amicable relations previously existing.

Aside from this incident, there is satisfaction abroad with the attitude taken by our government up to this time — even in Germany; if there are some English newspapers which would have us pull their chestnuts out of the fire, and

some German which would have us legislate to forbid the sale of arms and military supplies to England, as we stopped the exports to Mexico, they all admit that there is no criticism to be made of the policy of the President or his official acts. There is not the slightest insinuation that we have failed in any respect in our duty as a neutral under the existing laws; Secretary Bryan's statement to Senator Stone must prove this to all who are unbiassed. This, together with the prevailing belief that there is in the White House a man of the exceptional stature needed for the wonderful opportunity looming up before him, makes it of the utmost importance that Mr. Wilson should not abate a single jot from the policy of neutrality he has marked out for himself and the country.

We are in all the better position to serve because the President has passed no judgment upon the allegations of German atrocities in Belgium, and has so wisely declared that these are matters to be decided not in hot but in cold blood. Among our public, too, there is a growing consciousness that few of these stories of atrocities can be supported, as our returning

American war correspondents have testified. The counter-allegations of similar brutalities by French, Russians, Servians, Germans, and Austrians against each other ought to make Americans realize how frightful are the cruelty and destruction inseparable from war, and how greatly a curious war-hysteria has distorted the vision and the statements of those who undergo the terror of modern carnage. When officers and men of unquestioned courage are actually being driven insane on both sides by the horrors they witness, it is not surprising that we have to deal with the wildest allegations, which, if true, would prove that human nature breaks down utterly with the first shots. The people of the United States will unsparingly blame those who are wantonly guilty when the facts are established; meanwhile, if the press is an index, they are more and more following the President's example and reserving judgment.

Great, doubtless, would be the service rendered to the Allies if the United States should fling itself into the war. Far greater is the service which it can perform if it holds not only our historic but our moral position intact.

“This,” Mr. Wilson wrote, “is the time above all others when we should wish and resolve to keep our strength by self-possession.” For us to rush either into the war or into extensive preparations for war would be not merely to tie the President’s hands, to deprive him of his position of vantage, but to rob the nation of its vast moral prestige, for it would be the very reverse of keeping our strength and self-possession. And the goal is not merely the extending of our good offices and the offering of a navy-yard building for the plenipotentiaries to occupy, as Mr. Roosevelt was able to do for Russia and Japan. It is no distortion of the President’s just quoted words to see in them a desire to use our great influence in the direction of such a disposition of the question of armaments as to make impossible a recurrence of this cataclysm with its horrible sum total of misery. That this country has suffered so gravely because of the war in its rôle of innocent bystander, and that it is, as the President says, honestly desirous of itself keeping out of the maelstrom of militarism, are other reasons that assure it a position of commanding importance provided

that the President remains a friend to all parties until the end. For him to attempt to achieve his great aim with Congress voting a larger army and navy and many new battleships would be out of the question. "You ask us to disarm," would be the answer, "when you are arming as never before. What sinister motive dictates the suggestion?" Should the President take sides, the moral leadership would fall to some one else, or, in the absence of any other powerful neutral executive, would be lacking altogether.

How grave this would be is apparent if one considers that all hope of the world's return to sanity rests upon the coming peace conference. What shall it avail humanity if a hateful Prussian militarism be smashed only to leave in its place a more hateful and dangerous Russian militarism and an even more dominating British navalism? Where will be the gain if the Continent remains armed precisely as before save that Germany's wings are clipped? What hope of lasting peace will there be if the militarists are to continue to dominate in the counsels of state? How long can so unnatural an alliance

as that of reactionary Russia and liberal England last if there is a return to the old system of checks and balances, of secret and open alliances, with the power to make war in the hands of a few who have supreme authority over great military machines? Everybody now agrees that this war must have come, sooner or later, because the militarism of Europe made it inevitable. How soon will another come if it is left practically intact?

It is the curse of the whole military business that, whether it be German, or French, or Russian, or American, it inevitably breeds a powerful military propaganda. Its advocates talk it, think it, prepare for it, urge it, glory in it, insist that blood-letting must come every now and then, and, in Europe, have trained whole peoples to their belief. The psychological effect of all of this false teaching is inestimable, and it is not to be measured by the numbers engaged in it; a few men of Lord Roberts's standing, assuming expert knowledge not possessed by any one else, may do incalculable harm. It is beyond all question that the Austrian military party sought war



with Servia not once, but three times, and finally brought it about, thanks to the archduke's assassination. Its members, and the rank and file of the army, were exultingly certain that war was at hand in 1912. "Es lebe der Krieg!" was the toast, and bitter was their disappointment that their old Kaiser held them in check during the Balkan wars. It was not German militarism that was the extreme danger point then but the Austrian, with the others not far behind, the Austrians solemnly prating that armies are the best insurance against war when they were doing their utmost to bring it on. They differ but in degrees. And is the world, when this war is over, to continue their policy, which at best spells economic ruin, with the United States perhaps following suit? If so, the men who are being maimed and are dying by the hundred thousand in the prime of their manhood are suffering and perishing in vain.

Again, what more glorious opportunity could there be than this offers for that moral leadership of the world which in some respects has always been America's? Indubitably, we shall



hear warnings that for Mr. Wilson to do anything beyond providing a meeting-place for peace plenipotentiaries may lead to dangerous entanglements; that it is our business to stand aloof and mind our own affairs lest we be drawn into some international agreement of the kind against which Washington in his far-seeing wisdom warned us so earnestly and so wisely. But wisely to exercise our *moral* influence will mean nothing of the kind. Already we have been deeply affected by the war; we have been drawn into it spiritually by our sympathies, economically through our suffering and through the contributions of our granaries, our arms, and our powder factories; politically because of the appeals to us to act as judge of wrongdoing. Shall the most extraordinary chance to lead the world back to the natural, peaceful status of man be allowed to slip by with no effort on our part? It is unthinkable, if there is any imagination left in the White House; if there is any response there to an overwhelming moral appeal. We know there is.

Here is a straightforward practical undertaking on behalf of peace to stir every man not

war-mad. Never was there a better vantage-ground for attacking the whole vicious system, because some of the oldest militaristic shibboleths have been shown to be utterly baseless. That hoary old falsehood that armies make for peace is as exploded now as is the assertion that training in arms alone keeps a nation from rotting out, from becoming craven and flabby. Hereafter militarism is in the open, to be defended, if at all, on the grounds that nobody is to be trusted; that mankind has not advanced during the centuries; that there is no way for any nation to live save with rifle on hip; that there is nothing in morality or national honor or Christianity. If militarism is to continue to exist, we must be frankly brutal, frankly cynical, and here in peaceful America we shall be urged by some fellow citizens to make the business of preparing to kill other peoples the supreme business of the nation. The world, in other words, is to defeat Prussian Bernhardtism, but is itself to be conquered by his doctrines — even the most peace-loving of democracies, safeguarded by two oceans; the democracy which came into being partly because of a

profound hatred of a standing army of its own folk which menaced its freedom of political growth. Are we calmly to assent to this teaching of cynics, or are we to seize the opportunity practically and seriously to contend with these forces which menace the happiness of the world?

Surely the President of the United States who failed to profit by the unique international position which presents itself would be recreant to this trust and to our national traditions. It is not meant by this that the President should take an aggressive attitude and insist that American commissioners shall thrust their legs under the table of peace. Active participation, if permitted, might easily be a fatal mistake; direct action, unless the opportunity comes just in the right way, might prove more hurtful than helpful. But behind the President stands the sound, generous, and united public opinion of the American people, and that can be focussed and expressed when the hour comes. How to make it tell is the President's task; it cannot be impossible when the belligerents have already besought us to exert

it. Failure, of course, may be the President's lot. The bitter hatreds being aroused may end the possibility of even his good offices; but emphatically this is a case where not failure but low aim will be the crime. The opportunity is to serve not merely America and the belligerents, but all mankind.

"For the finer spirits of Europe there are two dwelling-places," Rolland has written; "our earthly fatherland, and that other City of God. Of the one we are the guests, of the other the builders. To the one let us give our lives and our faithful hearts; but neither family, friend, nor fatherland, nor aught that we love, has power over the spirit, which is the light. It is our duty to rise above tempests, and thrust aside the clouds which threaten to obscure it; to build higher and stronger, dominating the injustice and hatred of nations, the walls of that city wherein the souls of the whole world may assemble." If this is Europe's duty it is still more that of the United States, to whom has suddenly come the spiritual and moral leadership of the world. It is for us to build higher and stronger than any one

else; not only to dominate injustice and hatred in other nations, but those in our own hearts. The people of this country would hail as another Lincoln a President who could translate into action their ardent desire to render this service in this spirit and to give expression to our own pacific aims; to extend that "final help" of which the London *Times* wrote. By the side of this, of what importance is a formal declaration that the United States views with regret the violation of Belgian neutrality? All the world knows that it does; to record it officially would be to antagonize two great nations and to tie our hands for the "final help."

But it is precisely for those two offending nations that the United States ought to step into the breach. The victors, if victors the Allies prove to be, must needs be checked, unless smouldering animosities like those left by the peace of 1871 and the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine are to rankle for another forty years, then to burst into flames again. Already in England they are beginning to see this. Men of light and leading are protesting that Germany must not be degraded; that all talk of

rending her limb from limb is as absurd as to speak of wiping her off the map. The "Union of Democratic Control" has been founded, one of the objects of which is to influence the terms of peace so that at least no province or territory shall be torn from its present allegiance, except by the consent of the people, duly registered by a fair vote.

Prominent writers like Professor Sidney Webb are voicing humane sentiments at public meetings, such as: "Humiliation is the most expensive luxury in which any victor can indulge, because it does not pay." Mr. Webb declares that it would involve "an enormous loss to the world if the war should end with Europe armed to the teeth, or if the enemy were left in a state of furious hatred." Others are even questioning the wisdom of a great indemnity, and are asking if the moral effect is not more advantageous to the nation paying the indemnity than to that receiving it — a question which inevitably recalls the French experience in paying the 1871 indemnity which Germany fancied would cripple her rival for years to come. Indeed, as eminent an authority as



Hans Blum insists that the indemnity so unsettled German finance in the years after the war and until 1880 as actually to have been a grave injury to the recipients. As for the moral effects, surely the injury done to Germany in the opinion of the rest of the world by her forced levies upon Belgian cities far outweighs the benefit of the actual sums received, which are at best trifling compared with what this war is costing her in a single week.

Still other far-sighted Englishmen are much less concerned with the terms of peace than with doing away with the political conditions which make such a catastrophe possible. They desire no more secret British diplomacy; they would broaden the basis of the English diplomatic service so that it shall not hereafter be restricted to graduates of Eton or Christ Church and those possessed of four hundred pounds a year. They would make it impossible hereafter for a split Cabinet to plunge Great Britain into war without taking a vote in Parliament, if not one of the people. Surely, if enlightened sentiment like this can make itself heard in England even in war times, when no one is sup-



posed to think save in accordance with the wishes of the Cabinet, and then only with a bloodthirsty Berserker desire to inflict untold injury upon the enemy, advances in kind from the United States would strike a responsive chord.

By the time the war ends we shall hear little or nothing of the talk of destroying Germany, and in that country there should speedily be an end of the nonsense that Germany is now fighting for her very existence. If history has taught anything, it is that a people with a strong individuality cannot be wiped out. Poland has proved that: divided into three parts it yet lives in tongue, in character, in the hearts of its people; and may, for all one can foresee, be on the verge of its restoration as a political entity. Were Germany to be divided up among the Allies it could as little be conquered. That which is sound and good in its *Kultur* would survive, no matter how great the difficulties. The German spirit — that part of it which all the world admires — is unconquerable; it can no more be destroyed than matter, which the scientists tell us<sup>7</sup> is indestructible. Norman

Angell has shown beyond dispute that in the modern economic organization of society no nation profits by conquest of territory. The United States has gained nothing by holding the Philippines, save an administrative burden costly in more ways than one. It has acquired no trade advantages which would not inure to it if it hauled down its flag and let the Filipinos govern themselves. So Germany, if she succeeds in holding Belgium, cannot hope to make Germans of the Belgians. They have been for a century trying to compel the Polish Prussians to become German Prussians — without success. They have fought some successful wars during that period, but they have lost every battle against the Polish language. The Flemish would equally survive under German rule as it has outlived the vicissitudes of the centuries. How the Germans have failed to win the affection of the captured French provinces is apparent to every student of the situation. Why should not every effort, therefore, be directed toward avoiding these old pitfalls and making a peace which shall advance humanity and not retard its spiritual development?

It is only the statesmen, the small ruling cliques, who, apart from the masses of the people, fail to appreciate this — who cling to the old shibboleths and still lust for conquests. The masses of no people seek the lands of others. Surplus populations do not by any means all go to colonies, when colonies there are. There has been nothing more striking about this entire war than the discovery of the multitudes of Germans who lived in France and England, and of the French and English who lived in Germany. Thousands of them refused to go even after war was declared, notably in Germany. That was their home despite their technical British nationality, and there they wanted to stay in peace, and there the men are in concentration camps to-day, owing to the ungenerous policy of the English Government. What would happen to German and Italian multitudes in the United States if we should go to war with Germany or Italy, it is not easy to foresee. This is one of the effective, but quiet and unsuspected, ways in which economic and social forces are gradually breaking down international boundaries and hastening the day

of a world-federation. It is one of the factors which make ridiculous the fire-eaters' assertion that Germany if conquered will be humbled in the dust. There is too little real enmity between the warring peoples, between the men in the ranks, who respect each other's prowess, to make this possible. All the greater should be the pressure from all neutral lands against any attempt to strike down her misled people.

American opinion, particularly, must be directed toward safeguarding the best interests of Germany when the war ends, for the claims of her people upon us cannot be denied, however we may reprobate her participation in the struggle or the policies of her General Staff. This will be the time to show how deep-seated is the friendship between the two nations, and to prove that we remember how German brain and brawn have helped to make this country what it is. German axes have hewn the pioneer's way through many a forest. In whole sections they alone till the soil. Everywhere they rank among the most industrious and law-abiding; few are either agitators or enemies of the existing order, so that there is wide-spread regret

that no more of them are coming to us. In our national crises they have stood fast, taking military service for idealistic reasons — thousands even who had not begun to master the English language. They are bone of our bone and sinew of our sinew. They have enriched our national life; what we owe to them for the development of art and music is incalculable. But if there were not a single German-born citizen among us, our debt to the intellect and the heart of Germany itself is such that this country could not be ungenerous or unjust to it in its hour of distress, whatever its wrong-doing. As Carl Schurz once put it: "The friendship between the United States and Germany is as old as the republic itself. It has remained unbroken because it was demanded by all considerations of interest, of civilization, and of international good will. There is between the two nations not the slightest occasion for discord."

Nothing makes friendships whether between individuals or nations as does generosity. The United States, which set the noblest example of forgiveness and of leniency ever seen in deal-

ing with its rebels of 1861-65, can prove that this is the policy which makes best for concord and amity. Had the scaffold taken its toll after Appomattox, no such speedy reunion as we have witnessed would have been seen. If that policy of forgiveness was possible in the heat and bitterness of our civil strife, when treason was rife, after the murder of the nation's best-beloved executive, the Englishmen who are already working for a future friendship between their country and the Kaiser's are eminently justified in their aim. Prussian militarism is a disease to be eradicated; the whole aggressive attitude of the ruling Germans who to-day embody the nation is the inevitable result of their militarism and autocracy, combined with the bad manners of a *nouveau riche* nation which has grown wealthy overnight. Our own country, if Dickens, Trollope, Harriet Martineau, and other travellers are to be trusted, went through a period of similar rudeness coupled with a similar egotism, until awakened by the Civil War. As it outgrew this state, so must embattled Germany hers. The point is that there is in German *Kultur*, that is, in her spirit, her



steadfastness, in the homely virtues and industry of the masses of her people, the frequent inspiration of her men of learning, her artists and musicians, in her reverence for the achievements of the intellect, much that is priceless for all humanity, and this must be preserved. Every nation makes some such vital original contributions to the credit side of the world's vast bank-account. England makes hers, and so does France, and so, too, through her democratic institutions, the absence of caste, the freedom of her people to think freely, to labor, to rise in the social scale as they please, does our own United States. From that credit total the world is not rich enough to spare a part.

Our country in this pregnant hour has another duty. It is to reaffirm to itself bravely and proudly the fundamental things for which the nation stands. Theoretically, we do not believe in kings any more than in standing armies. Yet there has been noticeable a tendency among us to look upon kings and kaisers and courts with a different eye from that of our fathers. Some of us have not only taken kindly to aristocracies, but have been eager to crook



the knee to royalty. It is a pleasant after-dinner babble to discourse of the evils of universal suffrage; even to lament, if things go not to our taste, that there is not a permanent, stable head at Washington. How else are we to have the kind of efficiency that is Germany's? Or as good city government? After all, there is little difference, the argument runs, whether you have a king or not; one's liberties are about as unfettered in England or Germany as in the United States. So we have graduated from the days when our fathers had such a hatred of royalty as to lead hosts of them to tear their families up by the roots and transplant them across the ocean; as to make our Fourth of July orators return with stale, but useful, reiteration to the fact that we are all kings; that we owe allegiance to no man; that we change our rulers as suits us and believe in no such nonsense as the divine right of anybody to decide the fate and destiny of the masses of his countrymen.

It is thus a wonderful opportunity to set forth the value of our republican institutions. Not that we believe them perfect: our Presi-

dent by himself, and our Congress, can involve the nation in war, ruin the hopes and aspirations of a generation, and plunge it into misery and grief without the consent of those so injured. But we can at least point to the millions who have flocked to us from abroad and their happiness under our flag, the eagerness with which they seek our citizenship, the passionate loyalty that a Carl Schurz, a Jacob Riis, or a Mary Antin brings to our institutions, and claim for those institutions that, more nearly than any others, they satisfy the human longing for equality of opportunity and equality in government. We have no reason to blush for them, but every reason to be proud. If there is any cause for which Americans are justified in proselyting, it is that of a republican form of government. Liberty is still enlightening the world; the American flag still stands for the greatest achievement in self-government in recorded times. All the more should this republic add to its long list of contributions to the welfare and progress of all mankind the magnificent one of leading the way to universal and permanent peace.









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